

A SHORTER  
HISTORY OF ENGLAND

*By the Same Author*

A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM  
THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE  
BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT  
CENTURY

Vol. I: To 1066.  
Vol. II: 1066-1348.  
Vol. III: 1348-1525.  
Vol. IV: 1525-1612.

WOLSEY

CRANMER

JAMES II

CHARLES THE FIRST

THE TACTICS AND STRATEGY OF  
THE GREAT DUKE OF MARL-  
BOROUGH

*Etc.*

# A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND

*By*  
HILAIRE BELLOC

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TO  
GILBERT CHESTERTON

*Idem sentire de republicâ . . .*



## PREFACE

Two things will be noted in this book which contrast with the methods and arrangements of most books on English political history: first, the proportions of space given to various epochs of time are very different; second, the two centuries following upon the establishment of aristocratic England—that is, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—are treated in a different fashion from the preceding centuries.

I owe it to those who may do me the honour of reading this book to explain why I have taken a new departure in each case.

My reason for doing so is the belief that history, especially elementary history, to be read at that time of life when we receive our strongest and most lasting impressions, should above all *explain*: it should give 'the how and the why.' It is the business of history to make people understand how they came to be; what was the origin and progress of the state of which they form a part; what were the causes which influenced each phase of change from the beginning almost to our own time.

Therefore we should not 'telescope' history. We should not give to the earlier part of the narrative less space than to the later part merely because the earlier was more remote.

Thus, the prime essential to be grasped in the story of England is the Roman foundation of our society. Britain is a Roman province. Our institutions, our laws, the instruments of our handicraft, our whole method of thought, our religion, our architecture, our alphabet, our political institutions, derive uninterruptedly from the day when the chaotic society of a half-barbaric island entered the fullness of Roman civilization. All has developed from that. Therefore full space must be allotted at the outset to the long four centuries during which our civilization was created and to the influences which produced it. To give to so vast a thing a few pages only, to suggest that the Roman armies alone affected this island and suddenly abandoned it, leaving no imprint of the great Roman scheme of civilization upon the soil and race, is to falsify history altogether.

## A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND

In the same spirit far more space should be given to the recovery of England after the breakdown of Imperial administration, to the re-establishment of civilization through the Church in the seventh and eighth centuries, than to the wearisome details of little barbaric chieftains, many of them half mythical, whose names and exploits fill hundreds of pages in such books as the fantastic *Making of England* and the rest.

I have allowed to the most important period of all English history (after the Roman), the Transformation of England through the total change of her religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, much more space than to the nineteenth. It would seem necessary to allocate space in this manner if one is to present a true scheme of the past: to present 'the how and the why.'

The second point—the impersonal treatment of modern history, since the Stuarts, after a different fashion from the earlier centuries—needs a more particular apology.

Up to the final destruction of kingly power in 1688 I have described in their place the principal personalities engaged, because so long as England was personally governed the character and acts of the King, of his advisers, of those who withstood him, are of paramount importance; or, at any rate, of equal importance with the large tendencies of each period. But once England had become aristocratic and therefore impersonal, after the fall of the ancient kingship of the English, the personal characters, talents, and actions of individual statesmen and even of commanders fall into a secondary position. Thenceforward, after the destruction of the monarchy, it is a class which governs, not persons. To explain cause and effect in the England of 1700–1900 one has largely to forget personality, and rather to consider the general forces.

My readers will find a strong example of this in the emphasis laid, towards the end of this book, upon the Great Irish Famine. In what may be called our official histories this Irish Famine appears—when it appears at all—but as a minor episode. Professor Trevelyan's *History of England* is perhaps the best example of a modern official text-book. It gives the Famine less than a page and a half out of 703 pages. Green's *Short History* is the official text-book of earlier date. It gives the Famine three-quarters of a page out of 1027 and does not mention it in the index. The volume on *The Reign of Queen*

## PREFACE

*Victoria*, in Longmans' "Political History"—another modern standard text-book—covers 508 pages. It gives less than four to the Famine. The reader will find in what follows my reasons for thinking the Famine of first-class importance, not only as a tragedy, but, what is more pertinent to history, as a cause, not yet exhausted, even of increasing effect: a determining cause in the fortunes of Modern England.

It will be noted that, at the close of the book, I have ventured less and less to conclude, and, as the end approached, confined myself more and more to bald and abbreviated record. My reason for so writing I have given in the text. It is that the nearer historical objects are to our own eye the more we lose proportion, the more we tend to exaggerate and to mis-judge in the presentation of motive and consequence. Modern custom demands that even the latest things should be recorded, but common sense requires that they should be *only* recorded, lest, in a very few years, the emotions attached to them, and still more our judgment upon them, should be falsified in the event.

H. BELLOC

KING'S LAND

*August 1934*



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# THE ROMAN FOUNDATION

FROM THE LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR (55 B.C.) TO THE  
LANDING OF ST AUGUSTINE (A.D. 597)

## PAGAN ENGLAND

**The Roman Empire.** England begins as a province of the Roman Empire. From that origin did she develop. All our institutions, instruments, laws, building, and writing derive from the Roman civilization, of which we are still a department.

To understand what England is, therefore, and how it came to be what it is, we must begin with the great Roman state in which this country, like all the rest of Europe, is rooted.

Now, the Roman Empire came about thus. At the beginning of our civilization, between three thousand and two thousand years ago (say 800-50 B.C.), there stood round the Mediterranean Sea a number of cities and states. Some were quite small—only a town and enough land around it to feed it—some much larger and forming kingdoms. There were the Greek cities and their colonies in Southern France and Southern Italy and Asia Minor, and there were the Syrian states and cities, including the Jewish state and Jerusalem, and the Kingdom of Egypt on the long, narrow valley of the Nile, and the colonies from Syria in Carthage and its neighbourhood (where Tunis is now) and the parts of Eastern Spain all the way to the Straits of Gibraltar, and the cities and states of Italy.

Of these cities of Italy, with their land round each, the most remarkable was Rome. It lay right in the middle of all this civilized part, and gradually by conquest and alliances began to group it all together. But before this happened, and while all these various cities and states were separate, they had one thing in common, which we call Civilization. They built in stone, carved statues, wrote, established records, and had inscribed laws. From this old civilization of the Mediterranean

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comes all that we have. It spread outward till we in the north, and many others, became part of it.

To the north-west, outside this Mediterranean civilized world, lay at first a *half-civilized* part, with traditional laws, a priesthood, and roads of a kind, but no writing or coinage or important buildings till the civilized part began to spread. This half-civilized part was most of what is to-day France and Spain and all Ireland and England.

Then there was a barbaric part full of wandering tribes which never had writing or proper building or coinage, or anything which goes with civilization. This covered what is now Germany and Poland and Hungary and Scandinavia.

All this old world, civilized, half-civilized, and barbaric, was Pagan. It had no certainty in religion. It had no common doctrine of a future life, and it only worshipped local gods differing from place to place. Also it was everywhere founded upon slavery—that is, only a part, and in most places only a small part, of the people were free men and citizens. The rest had to work for them and were bought and sold.

The Roman State gradually came to include all Italy between the Apennines and the sea. Then, from about 200 B.C. onward, it more rapidly absorbed North Africa from Tunis to the Straits of Gibraltar, the east of Spain, Lombardy, and the southern coasts of France. These various districts spoke many dialects, but the official tongue of all laws, of all permanent literature, and of the wealthy governing classes and officials was Latin. To the east of all this was the territory now called the Balkans and Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. It had been given a predominatingly Greek culture. Greek was the general language of its permanent literature and ruling classes and officials. This Greek world also fell under the influence of Rome, and combined with the Latin West, till the whole was one great state ruled from Rome. So far little was known of England by the civilized men of the south, but their merchants came to it now and then.

The first record of England by an eyewitness is found in sentences saved from the lost writings of Pytheas. He was a Greek who came from the world of the Mediterranean. He sailed hither from Marseilles, then a Greek colony, more than 2200 years ago. He came up along the South Coast as far as Kent, which had the same name then as it has now. So had

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the whole island, which he heard called Pretanic or Britannic. This was some three hundred years before the Incarnation of our Lord.

The next mention of England by a witness is two hundred years later, but it tells us little more. It is in fragments which have been preserved from the writings of one Posidonius, who wrote about a hundred years before the Incarnation and has little more to tell us than had Pytheas. Each of the two writers Pytheas and Posidonius notes the damp climate and the export of tin, and gives rough estimates of the size of the island—rather exaggerated.

**The Coming of Julius Cæsar (55 B.C.).** The true history of England begins in 55 B.C., with the invasion of the Roman general Julius Cæsar. At about eight or nine o'clock in the evening of August 25 in that year, the moon being ten days old, he dropped out of Boulogne harbour before a light southerly wind on the ebb-tide with a fleet of transports carrying about 10,000 men. Next morning he was under Dover cliffs, the edges of which were lined with warriors assembled to repel him. When the flood began to make eastward in the mid-afternoon he ran with it to Deal beach, and there hauled his vessels up and landed his troops, in spite of vigorous opposition. He had come on what is called a reconnaissance, to find out the conditions under which he would have to act next year, when he intended to come in force; his reason for doing so being that men had come from England (then called Britain) to help the people in France (then called Gaul) to resist him. He had conquered Gaul and now desired to prevent aid coming from across the Channel in case of a rising. His fleet was badly damaged by an easterly gale, just at the height of the spring tide on August 30. He did not go far inland into Kent, but recrossed the Straits to France with his army at the end of three weeks or so.

**Second and More Serious Invasion of Julius Cæsar (54 B.C.).** Next year, 54 B.C., early in July, Julius Cæsar returned with a much larger fleet, coming again from Boulogne and carrying over 40,000 men. He disembarked a little northward of his last landing-place beyond Deal, and immediately marched north-west to a ford on the Stour above Canterbury just under Bigberry Hill. This time he had a full plan in his head. There was no sense of nationhood in England then, nor

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any head; only a lot of warring clans, and among them one under a powerful chieftain called Cassivellaunus, who had his stronghold at St Albans. This chieftain had killed the chief of the Essex men (called Trinobantes), and his son had appealed to Rome for help. Probably Cæsar hoped, seeing the tribes in England so divided, to conquer the island as he had already conquered France, and add it to the civilized Roman world. At the end of the first day's march Cæsar's army forded the Stour and stormed the British entrenchments on Bigberry Hill, a couple of miles north-west of Canterbury. One can see the earthworks to this day. It is the first battle on English soil of which we have record. Just as he was going forward after this victory he heard his fleet had again been partly wrecked by a storm—as in the year before. He had to go back and see to it, and this delay spoilt his campaign, for it gave his enemies time to get together. However, he marched on after dispersing this native army, crossed the Thames above London (probably at Brentford), and took Cassivellaunus's stronghold, probably St Albans. Cassivellaunus sued for peace and gave hostages. But the delay due to the misfortunes of the fleet made it impossible to do much more with any hope of success, so Cæsar withdrew and got back to France with his army by mid-September. He had failed to conquer Britain.

**The Roman Empire.** Meanwhile, as the whole civilized world, including Gaul (now called France), which Julius Cæsar had conquered for the Romans, was being gathered into that one great state or nation, with one coinage and one set of main laws, all under Rome, the government thereof became a vast monarchy.

Before the next coming of the Roman Army to England the civilized world from the Channel to the Sahara Desert, and from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, with all Egypt as well and as far as the Danube and the Rhine, was under the Commander-in-Chief of the Roman Army. There was no king. The Commander-in-Chief was, in theory, only a servant of the state, but in practice he had become its absolute ruler.

The Roman name for a Commander-in-Chief is *Imperator*, of which we have made the English word Emperor. This Commander-in-Chief of the Roman Army, or Emperor, was the head of the whole of this great state and the real King of it, though he was not called King. The great-nephew of

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Julius Cæsar, Augustus, is reckoned the first Roman Emperor. After him came his adopted son Tiberius (his wife's son by a first marriage), who reigned from A.D. 14 to 37; then a great-nephew, for four years, and then an own nephew of Tiberius called Claudius, who reigned from A.D. 41 to 54. It was under Claudius that ENGLAND WAS AT LAST CONQUERED BY ROME AND BECAME A PROVINCE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

**The Founding of the Catholic Church.** While the first four Emperors of Rome were thus ruling over this one great state which held all civilized white men, there happened in one corner of it, Palestine, in Syria, the most important thing in history. This was the founding of the Church at Pentecost under Tiberius in A.D. 29 or so, about fifteen years after he began to reign. The Apostles, and a number of people who followed them, proclaimed at Jerusalem that they could testify to the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord, who had just been crucified, and that they could continue His presence among them by the Sacrament of the Eucharist in Bread and Wine. They formed what was called in the Greek language then spoken an *Ecclesia*—that is, a 'society'—with Mysteries and rules of its own, our English word for which is 'Church.' It spread very rapidly throughout the Empire in communities which sprang up everywhere, but were kept together by a discipline partly secret and organized under men called bishops, who were first appointed by the Apostles to stand at the head of each such community, and then in turn appointed others. This 'Society,' the Church, taught what our Lord had taught about right and wrong, about His own divinity and an eternal life to come. To distinguish it from the small sects who broke away from it with false doctrines of their own it came to be called, in about a hundred to two hundred years, Catholic—that is, universal: and as the Catholic Church it is known to this day.

**The Conquest of England.** Meanwhile (54 B.C.—A.D. 43) things were happening in England which made it certain it would soon become part of the Roman Empire, as France (Gaul) already was. The Cassivellaunus who had fought Cæsar had a relative, probably a son, who reigned after him, and whose son again, Cunobelinus (called in English legends Cymbeline), ruled in South England at the time of the Incarnation, when Augustus was Emperor of Rome. One of this

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man's sons, being in danger at home, fled for protection to the Roman court, while his brother Caractacus (whose native name may have been something like Caradoc) ruled in South England from about A.D. 41 onward. All the while England was getting more and more influenced by civilization. It had a good coinage, imitated from the Roman, and constant trade and other connections. Claudius determined to annex it. He sent Aulus Plautius as general, in the spring of A.D. 43, with 150,000 men, and followed himself. Caractacus was driven from his capital at Colchester into the West, and in four years, by A.D. 47, all South England east of the Severn and up to the Midlands (probably up to the line of the Avon and the Ouse) had submitted to the Roman Empire. Aulus Plautius came back to Rome and was given a public triumph. He was succeeded, as commander of the army in Britain, by Ostorius Scapula.

Ostorius Scapula captured Caractacus (perhaps at Caer Caradoc, in Herefordshire), sent him to Rome, and pushed the border up to about Chester and the Humber, with a frontier garrison in Chester and another in Lincoln. After his death and an interval with two other generals in command Nero, the stepson of Claudius (who had become Emperor of Rome in A.D. 54), sent over Suetonius Paulinus to govern Britain, in A.D. 59.

**The Great Rebellion of A.D. 60.** Suetonius had conquered Anglesey, which was specially sacred to the Druid religion and specially hostile to the conquerors, when he heard of a great rebellion in the south. Hitherto the Roman Emperors had ruled Britain not only directly, but with the help of local chieftains, who were allowed districts of their own, like Cogidumnus, who was a little King over the Regni in Sussex, and Cartimandua, who was Queen of the Brigantes (Yorkshire). Among others was Prasutagus, King of Norfolk and Suffolk (the tribe called Iceni). When he died some oppression (in part due to money-lending by a Roman noble and minister of the Emperor, Seneca) led to a rising under his widow Boadicea.<sup>1</sup> She led a host of 120,000 men, including many from the Trinobantes of Essex. They sacked Colchester, where a large Roman town had been founded, and also London,

<sup>1</sup> This is the most correct spelling of a name which has come down in various forms.

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which was a large, rich city full of merchants and the new Roman civilization. Altogether 70,000 settlers and their dependants were slaughtered. Suetonius had great difficulty in meeting the rebellion, for his regular troops were few in number, and some of the garrisons failed to reach him. But he was victorious in a battle of which we do not know the exact site, somewhere north of London, and put an end to the rebellion. All was quiet by the next year, A.D. 61.

**The Rule of Agricola (A.D. 78-84).** In the next seventeen years Yorkshire (the Brigantes) was occupied, and Roman York was founded (Eboracum). Wales was held. Vespasian, who had been a subordinate general in Britain during the first invasion under Claudius, was now Emperor in Rome. He sent over a general of high birth, a native of Southern France called Agricola, to govern Britain in A.D. 78. Agricola was much the greatest of the early Roman Governors of England, and under him the final occupation of the province was accomplished, forty years after the main invasion by Claudius and nearly 140 after Julius Cæsar's first landing. Agricola put taxation on a just basis, occupied Wales, pushed right up into the Scottish Highlands, and sent a fleet all round the island. He intended to occupy Ireland as well, but the home Government would not let him. When he was recalled after six years, in A.D. 84, he left all in order and in a well-founded civilization, from the Grampians southward to the Channel, and England was henceforward a part of the great Roman State or Empire. But unfortunately Agricola's great idea of making all the British islands Roman was not carried out by the Emperor, and they have suffered from the division ever since. All that became Roman was England with Wales and the Lowlands of Scotland. Ireland, which, unlike England, had a sense of unity and a head King, was never Romanized.

**The Long Peace (A.D. 84-192).** When Agricola went back to Rome in A.D. 84 Vespasian the Emperor was dead, as was his son Titus, who had reigned after him; the brother of Titus, Domitian, was on the throne. It was the beginning of a long peaceful century for the whole Roman Empire, a peace which was nearly as unbroken in the new province of Britain as elsewhere. This long peace went on till A.D. 193 in a succession of Emperors who were each well chosen and were capable administrators. After Domitian, in A.D. 96, came

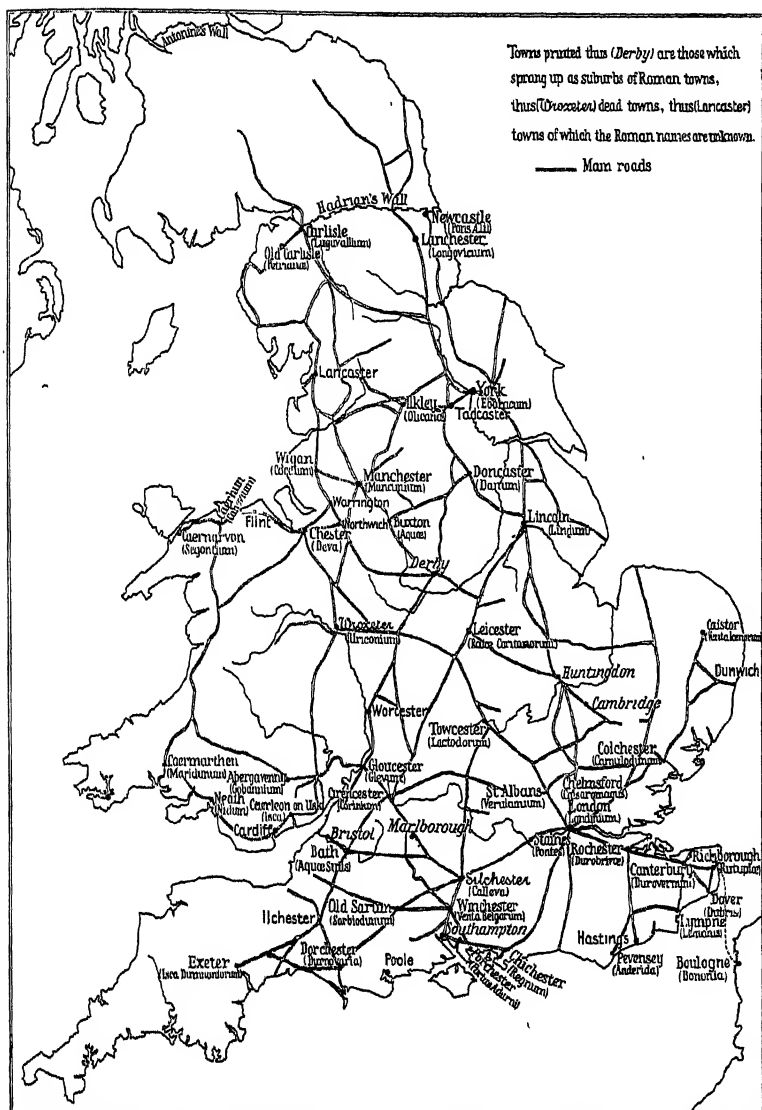
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Nerva, a man of good legal family, who had the sense to choose for his successor a solid soldier, risen from the ranks, called Trajan; he ruled till A.D. 117. Trajan chose for his successor Hadrian, who came to England about A.D. 120-122, and went all over it and built a boundary wall from the Tyne to the Solway, of which ruins still remain. After Hadrian (A.D. 138) came Antoninus Pius (A.D. 161), and he unfortunately chose for his successor Marcus Aurelius.

Hitherto the strength of the Roman Emperors had lain in the fact that since Nero they had all been chosen for their military capacity. That excellent rule was now abandoned. This Emperor Marcus Aurelius, instead of choosing a proper successor for military and administrative talent, was weak and foolish enough to favour his worthless son Commodus, who was murdered after twelve years of bad rule, in A.D. 192. Then civil war broke out between rival generals, each wanting to be Commander-in-Chief—that is, Emperor—and so the Long Peace was at an end.

**The Effects of the Long Peace. The Catholic Church and the Empire.** The Long Peace of more than a hundred years had two very important effects.

First, it made civilization grow, with fine cities, plenty of trade, and great roads built everywhere, so that men came to feel the Roman Empire to be securely set up for ever, and, in spite of its later troubles, this feeling lasted on for hundreds and hundreds of years, and never quite died out. Second, it allowed the Catholic Church to strike deep root, to increase greatly in numbers, and to spread on all sides. As the Church had a strong organization of its own (which, as we have seen, was in part kept secret in order to preserve it), it clashed with the government of the Empire, forming a sort of state within the state; this rival power the Imperial Government would not tolerate. At the same time the Catholic Church held very different morals from the Pagan world around it, and especially it would not allow its members to take part in Pagan worship at the altars and images of gods which it knew to be false gods. It would only allow them to worship Jesus Christ in the "Sacred Mystery" of the Eucharist, where its priests consecrated bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord. Now, all public life in the Roman Empire was mixed up with Pagan worship: for instance, worship of the "Goddess Rome," of the



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The Diocese of Britain had by the end of the fourth century five provinces, called Britannia Prima, Britannia Secunda, Maxima Caesariensis, Flavia Caesariensis, and Valentia. There is no certitude upon their position. Judging by analogy, Britannia Prima might be the southern part of Britain, and Britannia Secunda the Midlands. Valentia, subject to incursions or invasions, would probably be the northernmost, between the Forth and the Wall; and Maxima Caesariensis from the number of its troops may well have been the next northernmost. This would make Flavia Caesariensis correspond to Wales. On the other hand, the early occupation of that part makes it possible that Wales was Britannia Secunda. There is nothing established.

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Imperial power and the Emperor's authority, to which soldiers and civilian employees bound themselves by Pagan rites. For all these reasons the authorities opposed the Church, and often prosecuted her members for secret conspiracy and treason. Many so prosecuted refused to yield and were imprisoned as captives or put to death. These the Church called (and calls) her martyrs, a word meaning 'witnesses,' because they bore witness to the Faith by preferring suffering to the denial of the Faith. The Church was so strong that it increased in spite of this continual prosecution and cruel repression. It grew to be present everywhere throughout the Empire. It came to have a bishop in every important town, and even began to send missionaries among the Barbarians outside the Empire; but the chief Bishop was in Rome, where the first Bishop had been St Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and where he and St Paul, the great missionary, had been put to death.

**England during the Long Peace.** England during the Long Peace shared the prosperity of the Empire, and became so welded into it that men soon forgot they had ever been anything but Roman citizens. But there were some things about it which should be remembered, for they had a great effect on the future. In the first place, England (Britain) was the most remote province of the Empire and the coldest, rainiest, and most northern. Unlike other parts of the Empire, England was open to Barbarian raids from the beginning, because it had not a natural boundary. Gaul (France) had the broad and deep river Rhine between it and the Barbarians, Spain had the sea all round it, and south of the African part of the Empire all was desert. If Agricola had had his way, and all the British islands had been occupied by the Roman armies, England would have had no Barbarian trouble. But as it was the Highlands of Scotland and their wild tribes were not held. A ditch and bank of turf existed across the narrow part of Scotland from near Glasgow to the Forth below Stirling, but it was not always held. Also Hadrian had built behind it his stone wall from near Carlisle to near Newcastle, covering both those towns. But it was an artificial line, not as strong as a deep river would have been. Then, again, Britain was an island: therefore it might get cut off from the rest of the Empire for a while, and also its coasts lay open to incursion

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from neighbouring pirates beyond the seas to the east and north, whenever they should learn to build boats, and later from Irish on the west.

Again, Britain contained a good deal of wild mountain-land, and as the Roman Empire did not tyrannize over people or try to make them all talk the same language, local languages largely survived in this remote province. We do not know much about these dialects, but it is probable that while most people, especially in the numerous towns, talked Latin, many country and mountain people in the rougher parts talked what are called Celtic dialects, like the Welsh and Highland Celtic and old Irish of to-day. Perhaps on the east and south-east coasts a good many already talked dialects called Teutonic—that is, of a German sort, such as were talked on the other side of the North Sea.

**Separate Military Position of England.** On account of Britain's special circumstances there was one raid of Barbarians during this time, in the year 183, and also a bad mutiny in the Army. And when the Long Peace broke up on the murder of the Emperor Commodus in 192 a most significant thing happened. Commodus in his last year had sent a certain Albinus to govern Britain. Already, twelve years before, the then commander in Britain, Italicus, had been acclaimed Emperor by his troops, and now Albinus, when Commodus was murdered, set himself up alone here and ruled independently. On the Continent a new Emperor, a strong soldier called Septimius Severus, was Emperor. But he allowed Albinus to call himself Cæsar—that is, coadjutor to the Emperor. Albinus made an effort to be full Emperor, crossed the sea to challenge Septimius, and was defeated and killed at Lyons, in France. But his effort at separate rule in England was remembered and later repeated.

**The Conversion of Lucius.** Another effect of the position of England in the Empire was the rather late growth of the Catholic Church here. Very early indeed people contemporary with the Apostles seem to have founded a little church at Glastonbury. The legend says it was Joseph of Arimathea who came there, and it may have been. At any rate, the tradition of a very early foundation is too strong and unbroken to be neglected. But we have no record of Catholic action or writing here such as we have in France and Italy and all over

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the east and south of the Empire. The first certainly historical record of the Faith is late in the Long Peace under the year 167, when one of the little local chiefs to whom the Roman Empire allowed a certain power, called by the Roman name of Lucius, sent to Rome for a missionary. Eleutherius, later Bishop of Rome, sent one to him, and Lucius was baptized and presumably founded a church. Much confused legend, most of which is certainly untrue, arose round this famous episode. But there is no sufficient reason to doubt the baptism of Lucius and the mission to Britain, which were preserved in the records of the principal bishopric in Rome.

**Septimius Severus in Britain.** The taking away of soldiers from England by Albinus for his Continental expedition tempted the Highlanders beyond the northern border to make another raid. It was found very difficult to beat it back, especially as Severus had divided Britain into two provinces, the Upper, or Northern, and the Lower, or Southern (nearer Rome: 'upper' meant farther from Rome; 'lower,' nearer Rome). He had done this to prevent the whole of England being under one commander who might revolt as Albinus had done. But it had the disadvantage of preventing a united command. Senecio, who was in command in the Northern Province, was so hard pressed by the Scots from beyond the frontier that he sent for the Emperor himself, and that fine soldier, though now over sixty and suffering badly from gout, set out for England. He landed in 208 with a very large reinforcement: more than 50,000 and perhaps 100,000 men. In the next year, 209, he tried to annex the whole island, including the Highlands of Scotland, but he failed to do it, losing half his army. He repaired Hadrian's wall, and came back to York. He was preparing a new attack for the summer of 211 when, on February 4, he died. He said a fine thing before dying: "I found the Empire in a welter: I left it all well ordered, even in Britain."

**The Effect of Septimius Severus.** Though Septimius was a great soldier, he did the Roman Empire great harm. He was jealous of gentlemen, to whose social class he did not belong (they ridiculed his accent), and he made it more difficult for men of good family to rise high in military command. This prejudice against the best-educated class hurt the Army. Also he followed the detestable example of Marcus Aurelius, and instead of choosing another good general to succeed him as

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Emperor, he fell into the weakness of advancing his own family. Like Marcus Aurelius, Septimius had married a very doubtful wife, Julia Domna, who imposed herself. She was an Oriental, the daughter of a Syrian priest, and she and her sister Mœsa had a great deal to say in the making up of Septimius' mind. He therefore gave the succession to his and her worthless son Caracalla, just as Marcus Aurelius had given it to Commodus, his worthless son by Faustina. And Caracalla, after just such another few years of misrule and murder, was himself murdered in 217. There followed a long period—nearly a lifetime, fifty-three years (up to 270)—in which the Roman Empire was in confusion.

### **The State of Civilization after Septimius Severus.**

What happened after the death of Septimius Severus was not, of course, all his own doing, nor nearly all. He only helped the trouble on by a bad succession and tampering with the Army. The real trouble was the old age of civilization. The Empire had now been a civilized thing under one head for much more than two hundred years and was beginning to feel fatigue.

(1) The Army was changing. (a) From being a highly professional force, moving all the time from place to place, it began to be more *sedentary*; its units fixed in one place, marrying and settling there, and only occasionally and with difficulty moved over great distances. At the same time its local generals became more fixed. (b) Its *regular* recruitment became local, so that it did not act so well as one force, but each unit felt sympathy with its own district; and as it was naturally garrisoned on the outskirts of the Empire to watch the fortress, it became less civilized, often including Barbarians hired from over the borders. (c) The *irregular* forces grew more and more in proportion to the regular. Whole batches of Barbarians, called 'Federate' (*i.e.*, allied) troops, began to be incorporated under their native chiefs because they were cheap and hardy. These formed almost independent units. Now, the Army was the foundation of all that society and held it together: every change in the character of the Army affected all the vast commonwealth, from the Scottish mountains to the Sahara and from the Atlantic to the Syrian desert.

(2) The arts became weaker from the same cause of fatigue. Sculpture got worse, and writing; and buildings, though getting bigger, were uglier.

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(3) Men were losing their old certainties because the Pagan religions were breaking down. In all this bad state of affairs only one institution increased in vigour, gave more hope and character, and afforded a refuge. This was the Catholic Church, which increased in organization and numbers everywhere, though still in most places but a minority—in many a small minority—and treated with hostility by the official classes, the Government, and the bulk of Pagan society. There arose also a mass of Catholic literature which expanded as the years passed. But there was this interesting thing to note: the Church and its writers were boycotted. To read the Pagans of the day, especially the official ones, you would hardly know that the Church existed, or had anything to say for itself. But it grew continually both in numbers and strength, still more in the appeal it made to the world around, where things were beginning to go wrong and the old rituals no longer appealed to men. Later on St Jerome said a remarkable and true thing. He said that if only the Empire as a whole had been converted to the Faith *in time* the old civilization would have been preserved. As it was, the conversion, when it came, saved all that could be saved of arts and literature; but it came too late to preserve that high civilization intact. It did, however, preserve so much of it as to enable Europe to carry on through the decline and to rearise in the Middle Ages.

**The First Pirate Raids on England.** The Oriental marriage of Septimius Severus had very bad effects. His wife's nephew, Heliogabalus, was a contemptible Emperor, and after his cousin Alexander, in 235, government fell into confusion. One Emperor after another was murdered—there were eight in eighteen years!—and the last, Valerian, died a prisoner in the hands of the Persians. Meanwhile the Outer Barbarians had learned much from the Empire: the powerful and rich civilization with which they traded and in whose armies they enlisted, and into which they came in great numbers to work and seek their fortunes. Among other things picked up from the Empire they learned the art of making larger boats and sailing over wide seas. Some of them who had thus learned how to make large boats, and who were familiar with the civilized countries, came in pirate raids across the North Sea from the coast of Holland and Frisia (the sea-coast from the Texel to

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the Elbe) and the Bight of Heligoland, to loot the English shores. We first hear of them between A.D. 258 and 259. From this date onward a number of such men from the Dutch borders of the Empire, the mouths of the Rhine and the Ems and the Weser, began coming over to England. Some of them must have settled voluntarily, for there was dearth of labour, and others later were brought over bodily as slaves or half-slaves to till the land. We hear of another big raid in 282-283, and generally it seems there was a whole line of shore on the south-east and east of England beginning to be settled from across the North Sea. Later it was known as "the Saxon shore," either from Saxon garrisons in Roman pay or because most of the raiders were called Saxons. But there were also Franks from the Rhine and Frisians from North Holland and other newcomers, all speaking Low German dialects.

**The German Settlements.** Whether there had been people speaking Low German dialects on the east and south-east coasts of England before the Roman Conquest we do not know, but in the state of society between A.D. 250 and 300 and later they came regularly. It must be remembered that by this time a great part of the Army was of this kind, barbarian by recruitment and speaking for the most part not only the official Latin, but, among the soldiers themselves, a number of Low German dialects; so that the newcomers found kindred to receive them. Moreover, the mass of men in England, as elsewhere in the Empire, were slaves, and as there were not enough of them to till the ground, newcomers were welcome so long as they did not loot.

**Carausius.** At the end of the century, about 286, a man of Dutch upbringing, and perhaps Dutch by birth, was given command of the British seas, with a base at Boulogne. His Latin name was Carausius (perhaps his original name was Kraus). He made himself an independent ruler in Britain, just as Albinus had done years before, and brought in a great number of German-speaking soldiers from the Rhine. The regular Emperors, Diocletian and Maximian, who ruled together, not being able to defeat the excellent fleet of Carausius, recognized him as an equal and ruler over England, but they felt him to be a rebel at heart. In 293 they sent Constantius Chlorus (the chief general under them and one of the two named to succeed them) to attack Carausius. He took Boulogne.

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with Carausius' fleet in it. Carausius was murdered by his own lieutenant, Allectus, but in 296 Constantius landed in Britain with a large army—again of Germans hired to be soldiers—and brought the country back to the regular Imperial system under Diocletian and Maximian.

**Diocletian's Great Work.** We have seen how Roman government fell into disorder after Septimius, and got worse. Order was *partly* restored by Aurelian, who was Emperor in 270–275; but the final work of settling things was done by the great soldier Diocletian, who took over the government in 284. He was an Albanian of low birth. His parents had been slaves and he himself a common soldier. He had risen to be a general, and was about forty when he began his great reform. He gave Europe—that is, the Roman Empire—the framework which it maintains to this day; for the divisions he made and the titles he gave to important men still survive. For instance, Normandy is no more than “the Second Lyonesse division of Gaul,” and the districts into which he divided the Empire survive as the dioceses of bishops on every side. The stiff administrative skeleton which he provided carried our society through the bad decline which was in front of it. Britain he divided into four provinces. First (or Lower) Britain, Second (or Upper), Flavia Cæsariensis, and the greater Cæsaria. We have no record of their boundaries, but it seems probable that the first province, Lower Britain, corresponded to England south of the Thames, what was later called the Gewissæ and much later still Wessex. The second would correspond to the Midlands, later called Mercia: the third to East Anglia, with Essex; and the fourth to the North Country, later called Northumbria. He also arranged for the succession to the Empire as a whole. He worked with one other equal Emperor, Maximian (each called Augustus), and they appointed a Cæsar each to follow after them as Emperors; in the East (Asia Minor, Greece, the Balkans, Syria, Egypt) Galerius, in the West (England, France, Spain, Italy) Constantius Chlorus, whom we have seen acting against Carausius.

**Diocletian's Great Persecution.** Diocletian's task being that of restoring the order and greatness of the Roman Empire, he was naturally led to make a last effort against the Catholic Church. The strong organization and discipline of the Church—which had made it a rival to the state seemed more and more

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formidable. Diocletian was reluctant to risk the struggle, but he was urged on by his Cæsar, Galerius, so he began, in 303, the most violent attempt yet made to destroy the Catholic Church. This, the last and greatest of the persecutions, failed. Very large numbers who had become Catholic because it was growing to be fashionable apostatized under the strain of official persecution. But those who stood out sufficed to preserve the Faith until it triumphed.

Their successful resistance was of the utmost importance because it saved the Religion of Jesus Christ, which was, after the approaching breakdown of society, to preserve all that could be preserved of civilization through the Dark Ages, until the great revival of the Middle Ages, destined to arise after many hundred years. It was during this persecution that the first martyrs *known* to have been put to death for the Catholic Faith in England suffered. Their names were Albanus and Amphibalus. (Some doubt the second as legendary, but the first is certain.) Albanus, of whom the modern name is St Alban, was killed at Verulamium, which afterwards took its name from the martyr's shrine just outside the walls, and is since called St Albans.

## THE CATHOLIC EMPIRE

**The Empire becomes Officially Catholic. Constantine.** With the failure of the last great persecution it was clear that the Faith must triumph. All else had failed mankind. Although only a minority of the population in the Roman Empire was actively Catholic in this beginning of the fourth century (301-400), nearly all the rest were indifferent, except that a certain number of proud, rich families kept up the old Pagan rites as a tradition. They no longer believed really in the Pagan gods of old. Therefore when the Emperor Constantine went over to the Christian side the Church became free for the first time, and, having official support, rapidly spread throughout society. The Emperor Constantine was the son of the Emperor Constantius, who had been a colleague of Diocletian, but was favourable to the Church. Constantius had governed the West, including Britain, and that is why his remarkable wife, St Helen, got into legend as being a British princess. She *may* have been of British blood, but more probably she was a

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woman of humble birth from Bithynia, near Constantinople. The son of Constantius and Helen, Constantine, was with his father at York when that Emperor died in 306. His soldiers acclaimed Constantine Emperor. Constantine set out from Britain to fight for single power. He had much the best army of the time, made up mainly of English and French troops with German auxiliaries. In October 312 he defeated and killed, at the Milvian Bridge outside Rome, the Emperor Maxentius, who represented the Pagan tradition in the West. In the next year, 313, Constantine issued the **EDICT OF MILAN**, one of the most important acts in history. By this Edict the Church was recognized for the first time by the Empire, protected, and given full liberty of worship. By 324 Constantine had defeated his last rival and was sole monarch of the entire Roman Empire. He was then just over fifty.

**Constantinople Founded.** Constantine was not yet a baptized Christian, though he wholly favoured the Christian cause and had in St Helen a great Christian mother. He had had a vision of the Cross which had greatly impressed him, and believed himself specially protected as champion of the Church. He founded a new capital at Byzantium to be called New Rome, and known after him ever since as Constantinople. He dedicated it to Our Lady. This change in the site of the capital had a great effect. It left the Latin-speaking West, including England, less directly under the Emperor's eye, so that Imperial control over England, France, Spain, and Italy was weakened, and this prepared the way for local half-independent governments to arise in the West. It made the Greek-speaking eastern half of the Empire more prominent. Also it left to the chief Bishop of the Church, the Bishop of Rome, a beginning of local and civil power in Rome itself and greatly increased his political position.

**Arianism and Nicæa.** The official acceptance of the Christian Religion by Constantine produced a mighty change in all the Empire. People became Christian in greater and greater numbers because it was now both fashionable and official to be so, and the Church became more and more united with civil society. It was now possible to summon General Church Councils to which bishops could come openly from all over the Empire, and the first was held in 325 at Nicæa, in Asia Minor, about fifty miles from the new capital,

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Constantinople. It met to discuss and condemn the heresy of Arius, a priest who had denied the full divinity of our Lord. His opinions and sect, called Arianism, long continued to have a great success, which may be compared in its social effects and the length of its survival (three hundred years and more) to Protestantism in modern times. Constantine himself inclined to it, and more than one of his successors, while it rapidly became the chief religion of the Army, which governed all that world, and was professed by many of the local generals. It did not die out for many generations, though the bulk of society remained Catholic all around it.

**The Church in Britain.** England was affected, like all the rest of our civilization, by the great change from Paganism to Catholicism, for though the island was the most remote of the Roman Provinces, it was highly civilized, with a number of cities, a large population, and roads everywhere. Unfortunately, we have very slight mention of the Church here, save that strong tradition of a very early foundation in Apostolic times at Glastonbury, which was treated for many centuries as the oldest abbey in Christendom, and had precedence given to its abbot at Councils on that account. There was also, as we have seen, a local British chieftain called Lucius, who sent to Rome for missionaries and was himself baptized either in the year 167 or shortly after. We have that record of one martyrdom—St Alban and his companion. But we have little else. It is probable that there were some twenty-six bishops organized in two groups of twelve dioceses each: a northern group under a Metropolitan at York and a southern group under a Metropolitan in London. But we are not certain of this, and we only conjecture it from the fact that later on, when the Pope St Gregory drew up his plan for the Church in England, he followed this scheme, of which he presumably had some record which has not come down to us. Of course, long after the Empire had become officially Christian great bodies of heathenism remained, and these were perhaps larger in distant parts, like Britain, than elsewhere.

**The Full Roman Empire under Constantine.** The Roman Empire being now under the control of one man and its old Pagan character coming to an end, we must see what it was like, because all our future here in England came from that origin. It was one huge state, without frontiers or customs

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barriers (though there were travelling dues). Great roads built with public labour kept up its communications from Egypt to the Scottish border, and from Oporto or Cadiz to Damascus or Erzeroum. Its order, political system, and government depended on the Army, which was not used much inside the Empire (for the civilian population were contented and did not rebel), but defended its frontiers against unauthorized immigration and raids. This Army was some half a million strong, about, or less than, half of that number being regular (organized in small army corps called legions); the other, perhaps greater, half were auxiliaries, 'treaty men'—that is, men hired to fight under their own local chieftains; they were troops of the Empire and often furnished its highest military officers. All these troops were of long service and well paid, with the prospect of a good pension in land allotments at the end of their time, so that whole military families were founded, especially on the frontiers.

The provinces each had a military as well as a civilian governor, and the Commander-in-Chief was the monarch of all—the Emperor. There was no despotic state power in education and the rest, as there is to-day. Towns governed themselves, and people could bring up their children as they pleased. But taxation was burdensome and fell mainly on agricultural land, and therefore especially heavily on small owners. Most of the population were slaves who could still be bought and sold at will, though often set free by their masters as a reward of long and faithful service. The Empire was one indivisible whole, with one code of law, one army, one coinage, etc. There was not a western and an eastern Empire. But there was a distinction in language and habit between the western part—west of the Adriatic—and the wealthier and more populous eastern. The eastern part of the Empire had now Constantinople for its capital, and Greek, as of old, for its general language (with many local dialects also, of course—Arabic and Syrian and Copt and Berber, etc.); the western part had Rome for its capital and Latin more than ever for its general tongue: but with local dialects also—various Celtic dialects in the north-western fringe; various German dialects along the Rhine and Danube, in parts of Switzerland, and probably on a fringe of Eastern Britain along the North Sea and the Sussex and Kentish coasts. Punic and Berber were

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talked by the populace in North Africa, Coptic in Egypt, Semitic dialects in Syria and Palestine. What would interest us most to-day would be to know how much Frisian, Saxon, and other Germanic dialects were spoken along the eastern coasts of Britain, because, as we shall see later, these dialects under the influence of the Church spread slowly westward through the greater part of the island. For language, though it often has little to do with race, has a great effect on history. But the writers of the time cared nothing for differences in speech, being wholly absorbed in the great religious debate of their day, and have left us ignorant on that important point.

**The Institutions of this United Roman Empire.** The united Roman Empire, as it had been for now four hundred years from its first coming under one Emperor, and for three hundred since England had been added to it, was divided into 'main districts': Gaul (modern France with the Low Countries and all this side of the Rhine), Britain (England and Wales with the Lowlands of Scotland up to Clyde and Forth), Spain, Italy, Africa, Egypt, Illyria, Greece, etc. The main districts had been cut up by Diocletian into new smaller provinces, the boundaries of which still mark many modern divisions (*e.g.*, Alsace is *Germania Superior*, etc.). These provinces had lesser divisions, each under a *Comes* (English, 'Count'), a Roman military and civil title meaning 'Companion.' Those about the Emperor, his officials and civil servants, were originally called *comites*, the plural of *comes*, and the word was extended to include major posts. Our English word 'county' means a district with a *Comes* at its head.

A superior military title was the *Dux*, or general officer over a large district (from which came our word 'Duke'). Far below the *Comes*, or head judge and military commander and administrator of the county, was a minor local official, originally a company commander or centurion (officer of a hundred men), later called a *centurius*. The term became applied to the official who commanded and administered a small section of the county under the *Comes*, and from his name, 'commander of a hundred,' the little district came to be called a *centuriatus*—that is, 'a hundred'—like 'county' from 'Count' or *Comes*. Side by side with the *Comes* was an ecclesiastical officer when the Empire had become Christian. This was the ancient Christian Apostolic superior, accepted after Constantine as part

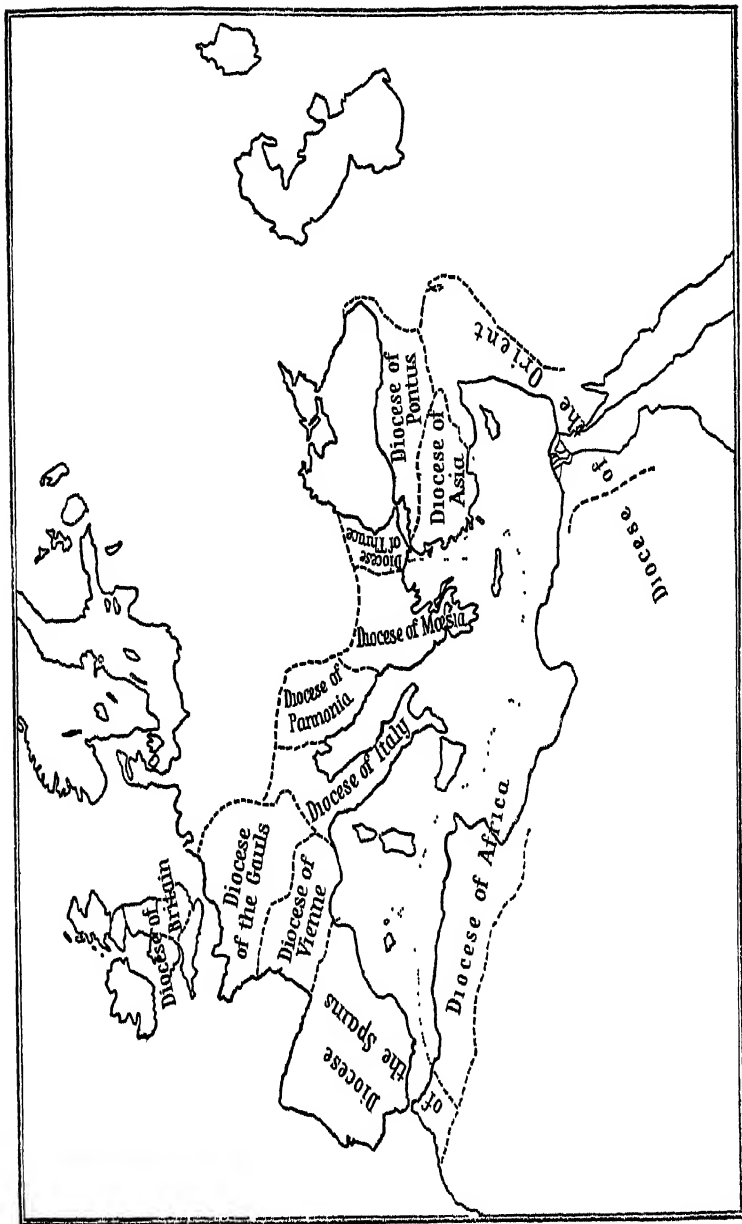
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of the regular Imperial hierarchy. His Latin name and title was *Episcopus*, whence we have our word 'bishop.' He ruled ecclesiastical affairs of the Church from his *sedes* (a seat or throne), whence we have our word 'see.'

**After Constantine.** Constantine died in 337, and after his death his sons fought among themselves for power. One of them, Constans, became supreme in the West and visited England with an army to repel a raid of Scottish Highlanders from beyond the border of the Empire in the north. A general of his called Magnentius mutinied, ousted Constans, and tried to seize the Empire in the West. But the remaining Emperor, Constans's brother Constantius, killed the usurper in his turn. Magnentius may have been English by birth (more probably German), and certainly his chief supporters were here in England. The Emperor's vengeance on them led to a second rebellion under Martinus, the local civil governor. It failed. But both the adventures of Magnentius and of Martinus showed that the nature of the Roman Empire was changing, especially in the West, seeing that local governors and generals could thus occasionally usurp power in the extreme province of Britain and revolt in Gaul, while the incursions of Barbarians from over the Rhine and Danube and from the Highlands of Scotland, from Ireland and across the North Sea, from Frisia and the Bight of Heligoland, grew more frequent.

**The Change in the Empire.** The Roman Empire was never conquered, still less destroyed. It survives to this day; for when we talk of Europe or Christendom we mean that civilization which the Roman Empire created and which, under the forms of the old 'feudal districts' and the modern 'nations' with varying frontiers, is still one thing. But shortly after the death of Constantine, from the time of his sons—that is, in the later fourth century—there began a great change, especially in the West. This change went on for a hundred and fifty years (roughly from 350 to 500).

The western, Latin-speaking part of the Empire (England and France, Holland and Belgium, Southern Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain, and what is to-day French North Africa), governed from Rome, got gradually out of close touch with the eastern, Greek-speaking half (the Balkans and Greece, Turkey—that is, Asia Minor—Syria, Palestine, and Egypt), governed from Constantinople. The arts began to decline.



ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

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People built and sculptured and wrote less and less well. It became more and more difficult to keep up the roads and the Imperial posting system. The knowledge of old learning also gradually got weaker. The less civilized people (Germans, some Slavs, Arabs, and outer Celts) who came in from beyond the frontiers were more and more frequently met with in all parts of society, even the highest. Looting parties from beyond the frontiers, coming into the civilized and wealthy Empire for plunder, became more frequent and numerous. It became more and more difficult to collect the taxes in the West. The great slave population got more and more fixed to the soil, and was less bought and sold, and also did less work than before. Those who exercised political authority found it harder to make themselves obeyed at a distance.

**Causes of the Change.** The main causes of this late change in the Roman Empire, particularly its decline in the West, were:

(1) *The removal of the main centre of government to Constantinople.* This meant that the mass of taxation was gathered towards that centre and that it had the spending of the Imperial treasury funds, so that the more distant West, and especially England, the extreme province overseas, tended to be starved of government pay for communications, armies, etc.

(2) *The fact that Roman Imperial civilization had spread outward beyond the legal frontiers.* There was a Roman main road from Cologne, for instance, towards the mouths of the Weser and Elbe; the valley of the Main was filled with homes and towns after the civilized manner, although these were far outside the legal limits of the Empire on the Rhine and Danube. Roman merchants and coinage penetrated to the Baltic, and missionaries spread the Catholic religion—or heresies—everywhere in an outer fringe beyond the frontier, and brought with them the arts of building and writing and a quantity of Roman and Greek words and ideas. Thus those who had been Barbarians—especially the Germans—were beginning to be half-civilized, understood Roman ways, took up Roman notions, learned to build and travel in ships more or less after the Roman fashion when they lived on the sea-coasts (like the Frisians and maritime Saxons), and to drill troops also after the Roman fashion when they were inland men (like the Goths). This made their admixture with Roman citizens within the

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Empire over the border constant and easy; but this admixture, while it raised the Barbarian, lowered the culture of the old civilized society.

(3) *There had been large importations of such outer folk.* Most of them were Germans—organized of set purpose by the richer men and officials of the Empire to till empty land as slaves or as hired labourers or as long-lease tenants, or to garrison frontier posts, etc.

(4) *The Army, the support and cement of the whole Empire, became more and more recruited from these outer folk*—not only Germans, but also Slavs, Moors, and even not a few Mongols. The auxiliary half of the Army was altogether made up of such, under its own chieftains; and the regular half became more and more composed of the same elements.

(5) *Old age.* All societies grow old and fatigued, as men do, and the high culture of Greece and Rome, having now filled the world of Europe for so many centuries, was feeling the weariness of age. This was the main underlying cause of the change, affecting all the rest.

**Julian the Apostate.** All through the rest of the fourth century (350–400) seven processes of the great change went on side by side: (1) the spreading of the Catholic Church over a larger and larger majority of the Empire; (2) the spreading outward beyond the Imperial frontiers of the Imperial civilization and religion; (3) the corresponding passing into the Empire of more and more people from outside—notably Germans and Slavs; (4) the antagonism, within the Christian body, of popular, universal Catholicism and exclusive, fashionable Arianism, a Unitarian heresy; (5) the general adoption of this last by most of the soldiers and their generals; (6) the Army, on which all Roman society was based, becoming more and more recruited from Germans and some Slavs, who now rose more and more to the higher commands therein; (7) the decay of arts and sciences and literature, and the slower decline of wealth.

Julian, Constantine's young half-nephew (son of his half-brother), was declared a Cæsar—that is, second under the Emperor (who was his cousin Constantius). Julian was commanding the forces in the West at this time (355–360), though he was not much over age. He ruled mainly from Paris. He had been brought up a Christian, but secretly hated the Church. He was a good soldier and did three things of great

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importance on the Rhine. (1) He destroyed a bad raid of Germans from beyond the upper river, who had come in to loot Alsace. (2) He marched all up the Main valley (already half Roman in its buildings) and showed the Imperial ensigns in the heart of the wilder districts beyond. (3) He took into Imperial pay a body of the Belgian clans called Franks, who lived half inside and half outside the Empire on the Lower Rhine. They were not very numerous, but warlike and well organized, and proud to be Roman soldiers. This new strength thus added to the Roman Army were put in garrisons under their native kings to defend the Rhine frontier from incursion, and they were settled in the Belgian plain.

**His Action in Britain. The Pirate Raids.** As commander of the West Julian had the care of Britain. Very bad raids from Scotland and from Ireland caused him to send a large force (mainly of German recruitment) over the Channel under his general Lupicinus, who based himself on London and restored order. But it was evident that incursions of this kind were becoming habitual as the various peoples outside the official boundaries of the Empire grew more and more familiar with it, learned discipline and seafaring and arms, and were in touch with their brethren *inside* the Empire who served there as soldiers or were settled as farmers or worked as slaves.

England offered a special attraction to sea-raiders for three reasons. (1) It was populous and wealthy, with many cities where money (it had the best money in the Empire) and goods were accumulated, all within reach of a coast. (2) It could not be easily or quickly reinforced, because it was cut off from the rest of the Empire by the sea. (3) It had close by on all sides populations not subject to Rome who were ready to raid it and by this time experienced in the wealth that could be gained in such raids.

Other such centres of the Empire lying along the frontiers—towns such as Cologne, Strasburg, Vienna—could only be attacked from one known direction, from across their bit of frontier. But Britain could be got at by sea on all sides, as well as from across the short land frontier to the north. The Scots, the Irish, the Saxon tribes who lived along the coasts of the North Sea, especially those in the Bight of Heligoland (or *Angulus*, which was the Roman name for a 'corner' of sea-coast), were all tempted to raid into Britain, and did so continually.

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**Julian's Empire, Apostasy, and Death.** Late in 360, when Julian was still only twenty-nine, his cousin the Emperor Constantius, in Constantinople, ordered him home. Constantius had grown alarmed at Julian's popularity with the western armies he commanded, and desired to deprive him of his command. But the army in Gaul mutinied against the Emperor's order and declared Julian Emperor. He marched with them, and a number of allies from the German tribes, right across Europe towards Constantinople. Before he got there (in 361) Constantius had died and Julian was sole Emperor. He had now openly declared his apostasy and began to work hard at stopping the progress of the Catholic Church. He had strong backing, for many of the richest men and most powerful officials and soldiers were still Pagan and thought the Church the cause of all the increasing difficulties and decline. But Julian had little time in which to try his experiment of restoring Paganism and stamping out Catholicism, for he was killed in 363, fighting on the Mesopotamian frontier of the Empire against the Persians. The Army, after a few months of Jovian, put at their head for Emperor a general who had risen from the ranks called Valentinian—a Christian.

**Increasing Insecurity of England.** In the very first year of Valentinian, 364, there were bad raids, and especially into Britain. Pirates from over the North Sea attacked the eastern shores, and Scottish raiders crossed the border once more. The eastern and southern coasts of England were probably already fortified and garrisoned with Saxons taken into the pay of the Empire, just as the lower Rhine was garrisoned by Frankish soldiers incorporated with the Roman Army, for shortly after we find all this coast from the Wash to the Wight called "the Saxon shore," and the same name is given to a fortified coast with Saxon garrisons on the opposite side of the Channel. We hear later of a Saxon garrison in Normandy, and there are many Saxon names of places in France near the Straits of Dover. No doubt these Saxons settled in the Empire and, forming part of the Roman forces, were often able to beat off their fellows who came from over sea outside the Empire to loot; but on this occasion the outer men, the pirates, were successful. They won some important action, and Fullofaudes, the general commanding "the Saxon shore," was killed. At the same time Nectaridus, who commanded in the North, was defeated and

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killed in a Scottish raid over the border. The Emperor sent reinforcements under two new generals, Jovinus and Severus, but they sent back for more men still, because they found the situation too much for them. Therefore in 368 the best general of the Empire, called Theodosius, was sent with a very large body of troops, again mainly German. By 370 he had fully restored order, having under him his son, Theodosius the Younger, and a general of capacity called Maximus.

### **Direct Rule from Rome breaks down in England.**

Britain was kept well garrisoned for a time, with an addition of more German troops under their own chief, Fraomar. But everywhere in the Empire—and especially in the West—it became harder with every year to keep up full Imperial order and control. Generals became each more powerful in his own district and over his own army, and they would fight among themselves. Maximus made a bid for power which did Britain a lasting harm. He appealed to the troops here to make him Emperor in 383, and took away across the Channel a very large part of the regiments on which the island depended for its safety. Maximus and his troops were defeated on the Continent in 388 by Theodosius the Younger (who was now the reigning Emperor), and Maximus himself was killed. England was never sufficiently garrisoned again, and could not now properly defend itself against raids from over sea or across the Scottish border. When the Emperor Theodosius died he left the government of the West to his little son Honorius, who was supported by a Slav general called Stilicho. Stilicho did send some new troops to Britain, but not enough, and later recalled them to Italy to help him in his struggle with another Roman general, a German called Alaric, for all the West was becoming a mass of independent commands. In 406 there was an especially bad bout of looting and marauding by bands who had crossed the Rhine. This made the communications from Rome to England through France more difficult than ever. Such troops as remained in England elected local rulers one after the other, whom they called Emperors; first Marcus, who was murdered, then Gratian, who was also murdered, then a certain Constantine. This Constantine in 407 went over to the Continent in his turn to make a bid for power, taking what soldiers he could with him, and England had thus less regular troops than ever with which to meet the Scottish raids by land, the Irish pirates on the western coasts,

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and the Saxon and Frisian pirates on the east and south. In 410 a strong appeal was made to Rome for reinforcement, but a civil war in Italy was at its height, and none could be sent. It was the year when Rome was sacked by a rebellious general (Alaric), and the Imperial secretaries could only reply that the citizens in Britain must look to their own safety and organize their own local forces. The year 410, therefore, marks the moment after which direct government and garrisoning from Rome ceased to be regular in the Western Provinces of the Empire, including Britain. All the West was falling under the government of local generals, who, of course, still recognized the Emperor, but probably gathered and held the public revenues where they commanded, and if taxes were possibly gathered occasionally still for Rome in England, the levies must have grown rarer and rarer and must within, say, a lifetime have ceased altogether. A new phase of English history was beginning, for henceforward (after a lifetime—410 to, say, 480) England, like France, Spain, Northern Africa, and, at last, even Italy itself, was administered locally in separate districts, great and small, which, in the absence of direct Imperial control, came to be taken over by whatever generals commanded the armed forces of each place.

**The Pagans and Heretics.** It must not be imagined that, because the political system was ceasing to be united, the Roman world did not still form one society. Men continued to travel all over it, and to exchange ideas and commerce as much as ever, and they all still thought of themselves as Roman citizens. Their principal interest was not in the form of government under which they lived, nor even in the rapid decline in literature and material civilization going on around them, but in the great *religious* movement which filled all those generations. Their instinctive feeling here was that, apart from its main function of renewing the spiritual life of the world, the Catholic Church represented civilization and could alone save all that might be saved of building, writing, philosophy, and the sciences and arts. The Catholic Church grew during this fifth century (401–500) to rally to it the minds of much the greater number in all the Empire, from the Persian border to the Atlantic. The last opposition of the great conservative noble families, who had long continued in the old cultured Paganism, died down, and the Church had only two opponents threatening the future of Europe. These were:

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(1) *The Internal Heresies.* These threatened either to break our civilization up into separate worlds or to ruin it altogether by corrupting throughout the Empire that central Catholic body of doctrine on which the saving of civilization depended.

(2) *The Barbaric Pagans.* These were the uncivilized, or only half-civilized, bands which lived either just outside the frontiers of the Empire or, as hired soldiers of the Empire, just within those frontiers, and organized in their defence. Some of them were Germans (along the Rhine and in Holland and up to the Bight of Heligoland), some Scottish Highlanders called Picts, some Irish sea-rovers called Scots, some Slavs, some Moors and Arabs on the Sahara frontiers, some Mongols who came in great waves from the depths of Asia. The danger from these Barbaric Pagans was not that they would corrupt the new religion of Catholicism on which our future depended, but that they would, without intending it, stamp out civilization altogether. This danger continued at intervals for hundreds of years, till about the year 1000, and while it lasted made the recovery of literature and the arts very difficult.

**The Internal Heresies.** Of the internal heresies the Arian had long been the most formidable, and we have seen how it got hold of the Army and its generals. It had also become the religion of many German and Slavonic tribes and their chieftains, so that, the recruitment of the Army being mainly from these tribes, and their chieftains being the local generals, the Arians had the government of whole provinces. The soldiers, drawn from all manner of races, followed the heresy of their leaders. It is probable that the old conservative noble families and their retainers were attracted by it as opposing the triumph of the Catholic Church, and helped to swell, not only its numbers, but, what was more important, the wealth and social influence at its disposal. Meanwhile the Emperor and his court had been at times Arian. Arianism, by attempting to rationalize the mystery of the Incarnation and denying the full divinity of our Lord, diminished the driving-power of the Catholic Church as a principle unifying and preserving our civilization. It seems never to have affected England. But from England came another heresy, Pelagianism, which gives us the next recorded episode in the history of the country.

**Pelagius.** Pelagius certainly came from the British islands, though we do not know his exact birthplace. Some think his name

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to have been the British name Morgan, of which Pelagius would be a Græco-Latin translation ('Born of the Sea'). He came to Rome at the beginning of this period (about 400), wrote largely on theology, and travelled very widely—as far as Jerusalem and Syria, where he probably died at a great age. His new doctrine was an attempt to rationalize the mystery of Redemption, just as that of Arius had been an attempt to rationalize the mystery of the Incarnation. Pelagius denied—or was accused of denying—the full implications of Original Sin. How effective the success of such a novelty would have been we may discover by looking at the modern world around us, which is increasingly Pelagian. Pelagianism dissolves the very essence of Catholicism, and, by the implication that man is naturally good or naturally perfectible, leads straight, after the preliminary exhilaration of licence, to the degradation of the individual and of society. It had an immense success, and had it triumphed our imperilled civilization would have perished even more certainly than under Arian influence. Pelagianism was defeated by a universal effort, led principally by St Augustine of Hippo, the great Latin doctor of the Church, a native of the African province—what to-day we call Tunis. But our interest in it here lies in the fact that it took strong root in Britain and led to the coming over of St Germanus on two occasions, and so leaving us some record of England in the fifth century.

**St Germanus in England.** St Germanus was a Roman citizen of Auxerre, in France, head of one of the great landed families of Gaul, married into the Imperial court, and appointed Dux by the Emperor—that is, military governor of one of the seven military districts into which the country was divided. He was about the same age as Pelagius. In middle life he gave up his lay honours and became Bishop of Auxerre. As such he came over to England to combat the Pelagian heresy in 429, and again in 447, urged by the Pope. While in England he led an armed levy—and perhaps some remnant of the Roman legions—against a raid of Picts and Saxons and defeated them.<sup>1</sup> Apart from his destruction of Pelagianism over here, the main historical interest of his second visit is in the picture it gives of England as late as 447. We may rely on it, for the account is in

<sup>1</sup> The action is known as the 'Hallelujah victory' because the troops had "Hallelujah" for the watchword and shouted it when they surprised and fell upon the enemy. The site is perhaps Maes-Garmon, in Flintshire.

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a contemporary life, published in that lifetime. Tradition will have St Germanus' principal conference to have taken place at St Albans, but, wherever it was (and he evidently travelled about in the island and would naturally pass through London), he found society fully organized: there is no sign of dislocation. A Roman official (prefect) receives him. Wealthy men attend his meetings in fine clothes. He works in a Roman city on the east side of the island, which city is apparently undisturbed. There is no appearance of general ruin nor mention of anything more than one of those raids from over the frontier and from the sea with which England had been familiar for more than two hundred years. There is no mention of any district being ruled, as yet, by a local chieftain as king. The payment of taxes into the central Imperial exchequer and the payment from Rome of official salaries in England may have ceased; local government may have taken the place of direct government from Italy, or even from a nearer centre; but no considerable disruption of society had occurred.

### **Britain breaks up into Many Little Kingdoms (450-550).**

In the hundred years following the last visit of St Germanus the change of the Roman Empire in the West went on more rapidly than ever. Literature and all the arts declined yet further, and in some isolated and distant parts sank to a level almost barbaric. Record is lost or confused. Local dialects also took the place of official and upper-class Latin in many districts, and local laws and customs grew up, stifling the old united civilized Roman law.

On the continent of Europe the large districts which remained most civilized were administered, roughly, by certain generals, the chiefs of small armies, mostly Germanic. Thus there was a separate government of south-eastern France, with its centre at Arles; another of south-western France and Spain, with its centre at Toledo; another of Africa, with its centre at Carthage. Brittany was left to itself, and administered its own affairs. In Northern France, round Paris, a Roman general called Syagrius ruled at the head of a little army of his own, and in north-eastern France, over what is now Flanders and Belgium and to the east of them, another general, Childebert, the chieftain of those Frankish soldiers to whom Julian the Apostate had given the guard of the lower Rhine, administered at the head of another small army. His centre was Tournai, and

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he ruled there in the uniform and with the powers of an Imperial general.

Meanwhile in Britain, which was a special and exceptional case, being cut off by the sea and remote from the chief districts of that declining civilization, government fell into quite small districts, and there were, at the end of the process, a great number of petty rulers, or kinglets, in the island. Thus we have actual record of an independent kinglet over Kent, of another over Sussex, of another over the district of which Gloucester was the centre, of two more at Bath and Cirencester, of another over the district of Leeds, of another over North Wales, of another over the old country of the Iceni (later called North-folk and South-folk—Norfolk and Suffolk), of another over Devonshire, of another over Lincoln, of another over the Plain of York and the coast near by, of another on the middle Thames and south to Winchester, of another on the narrow strip of north-eastern coast between the sea and the barren hills, from the Forth southward, with a court at Bamburgh—and so forth. Altogether by the time the process of dissolution had reached its last stage there may have been as many as fifty or more of these local arrangements, counting the smallest with the largest. The break-up did not happen all at once. It took a full century to reach its worst, and even then a memory of unity survived. Moreover, even at the worst we must not think of these districts with their little kinglets as fixed. Every man of chief importance in quite a small pocket of a few square miles would regard himself as local ruler, though acknowledging the superiority of a greater man in the local capital, and even the main divisions were quite uncertain. They fluctuated continually, fighting one another, establishing overlordships, sometimes combining to form considerable armies against another group, and sometimes accepting vaguely for a time a sort of general-in-chief.

**Christian and Pagan Kinglets. The Dialects.** This welter of little military governments, when it had reached its worst after 550, had fallen into two main groups by the fact that some were Christian and so retained some share of civilization, while others had lost it. Some of the districts were governed by chieftains still Pagan, most of whose subjects were also probably Pagan; perhaps, in some places, all were Pagan. These were naturally the most degraded, had suffered most by

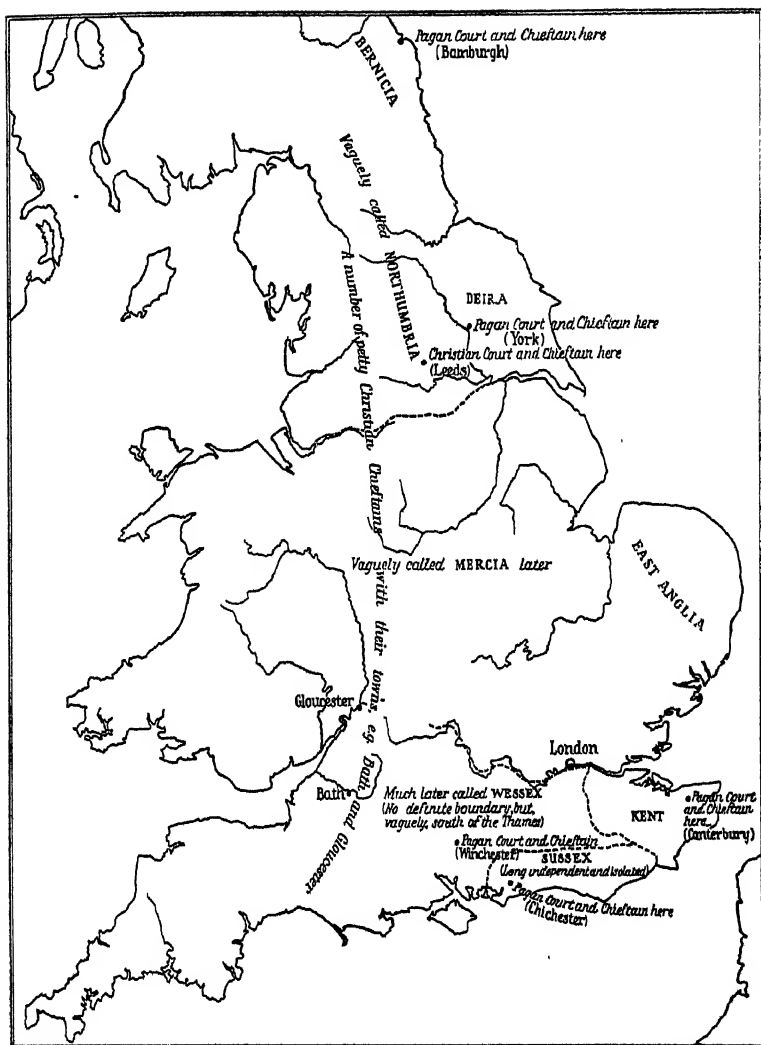
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the decline in civilization, and had lost all literature, the use of Latin, reading and writing, the keeping of records, and most of the art of building.

In some places, as along the coast of Sussex, which was badly cut off from the rest, they seem to have become almost savage. Other districts were governed by chieftains who were still Christian, they and most or all of their subjects. In these areas the Mass was still said, great monasteries flourished (as at Glastonbury, for instance, in Somerset, and at Bangor, in Flintshire), Latin was familiar to educated men and all priests, and there was some remaining acquaintance with the classics. Roughly speaking, the west of the island had retained a sort of isolated Catholicism with local customs of its own, while the east and south-east coasts seem to have suffered most from the loss of religion; in some places, apparently, its complete extinction.

There was another division, less important than religion, that of language. In one set of these petty kingdoms, or chieftaincies, the local dialects were what is generally called to-day *Celtic*—that is, of much the same sort as the modern Welsh dialects and Gaelic. In others the local dialects were what is called to-day *Teutonic*—that is, of much the same sort as the dialects of modern Holland and the German and Scandinavian states. There must also have been many districts where the two kinds of dialects mixed, or where they were spoken side by side.

Each of these groups of dialects, Teutonic and Celtic, was much affected by Roman and even Greek words, because those who spoke them had been mixed up with, or had been actually living in, the Græco-Roman Empire for centuries. A whole mass of common Teutonic words are proved to be Roman in origin—'silver,' 'spade,' 'inch,' 'mile,' 'pound,' 'road,' 'acre,' etc., and even all the days of the week are either half Latin (as Saturday) or directly translated from the Latin (such as Monday, the *Dies Lunæ*, Moonday; Sunday, the *Dies Solis*; etc.). The Celtic also were affected by Latin. Nevertheless the two sets of dialects were profoundly different. These groups of dialects were, like the religions, roughly divided into eastern and western. Along the East Coast the little chiefs and their courts, and presumably most of their people, spoke Teutonic dialects; in the West, Celtic.



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But we must not make the mistake of thinking that Teutonic dialects meant Paganism in 450-550, and Celtic dialects the Christian religion; we find many chieftains with Celtic names who were Pagan. Among kinglets with Celtic names who are Pagan we have Ceawlin, and later Cadwalla, in Hampshire, and Penda in the Midlands; while what was later called the court of Wessex was earlier known as the Gewissæ, probably, though not certainly, a Celtic name. Further, the legendary founders of the Wessex royal house have purely Celtic names—Cerdic and Cymric. It remains true that in the extreme east—along the sea-coast—the names of the kinglets are nearly all Teutonic, and in the extreme west all Celtic; between the two mainly Celtic.

Difference in language is a barrier, and difference in religion a much greater one; nevertheless the various sorts of kinglets, Pagan and Christian, Teutonic-speaking and Celtic-speaking, mixed with one another. You find, sometimes, a Pagan in alliance with a Christian against another Christian, or a Teutonic one in alliance with a Celtic one, and men of one court visiting or taking refuge in another. It is a great mistake to regard the island as sharply divided into two halves during this period, 450-550. It was rather a general chaos of petty authorities.

**How all this had come about.** The break-up of the old civilized society of Britain into a number of petty kingships had come about through the general decline of Roman society everywhere, plus four circumstances peculiar to England. (1) England, being the farthest from Rome of all the provinces and cut off by the sea, felt the decline earlier and more severely. (2) England (as we have seen) was exposed to raiding on *all* sides—from Ireland, the Highlands, and the North Sea and Channel. (3) The area so attacked from all sides was small: a raid could, in a few days, march from sea to sea, and there was no large body of mainland, as in France, to absorb the raiders and carry on tradition. (4) The 'fringe' of the Empire, the part next the frontiers, which naturally suffered most from the looting and ruin of the raids from outside, included, in England, *the main English gateway to civilization*—that is, the Straits of Dover.

This is a most important point. The old Imperial Army had held the frontiers. It had ceased to exist as an organized force, though some of its emblems remained and of its tradi-

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tions. The armed forces of 450-550 had come to be no longer the professional legions, as of old, but the small permanent armies of the warring generals, or occasionally short-time levies of militia on a large scale. Everywhere along the frontiers—the lower Rhine, the Danube, the Northern Alpine valley—the worst damage was done, and it was in this comparatively narrow border ‘fringe’ that civilization suffered most. Churches were destroyed, bishoprics abandoned, and the Mass and arts and letters forgotten.

On the Continent, where the ‘fringe’ had behind it a vast area of civilized country, the effect of this frontier ‘trampling’ was not so bad or so lasting. But here in England it affected Kent at once. Now, through Kentish harbours—especially Richborough—passed the main English communication with civilized Europe. Therefore *all* England was cut off by that one accident, and society suffered correspondingly, even to the loss of religion, save in the far western parts. That is why the East and much of the Midlands ‘beggar back’ to Paganism, and are found Pagan and half barbaric when full record begins again in 597. As to the presence of Teutonic-speaking courts and peoples on the East Coast, that was due to several causes. There *may* have been a belt of Teutonic speech here, along the sea-coasts, from the earliest time; for men had come over freely from the opposite shores and Belgic Gaul, as we know from record, as early as Julius Cæsar. During the full Imperial order, especially in its later stages (200-400), masses of Teutonic-speaking men arrived, as soldiers, as slaves, as free and half-free men, imported to till the land (for agriculture needed such aid at the end) and especially as *garrisons along the south-east coast*. We have seen how all the belt from the Wash to somewhere near the Wight was called “the Saxon shore.” Not only pirate raiders, who came over the North Sea continually in the last century and a half of Roman rule (generally called Saxons), but small bands hired as guards and fighters for local rulers, established themselves all along the coast. Moreover, the state of society about 500—most of the population slaves and even the free-men attached to a few magnates—made it easy for the armed mercenaries and their chiefs, by intermarriage and by seizing power over unarmed courts, to establish themselves, especially as so many of their kin were already here to receive them. They cannot have been very numerous: a boat only held

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fifty fighting men or so, and tradition always speaks of few boats—now three, now nineteen, numbers of that kind; but no great numbers were required.

In *one* case—but late in the affair—there does seem to have been a considerable immigration of some few thousands. A whole little tribe from the Bight of Heligoland took over the belt of coast between Humber and Forth. The Latin name for a bight was *angulus* (from which we get our word ‘angle,’ a corner), and presumably it was because they came from the Bight that these settlers were called Angli, or Angles, or Engles. Possibly they found it the easier on the north-east sea-coast to settle here from the abandonment of the land (there is no tradition of conquest here), and probably the neighbourhood of the Picts, or Highlanders, beyond Forth, who were always raiding and desolating this border district, helped their colonization. At any rate, there was here a clear case of settlement in considerable numbers late in the period 450–550; but even here the number of raiders from across the North Sea cannot have been enough to modify the inland population seriously.

**Our Direct Evidence of this.** Between 447 and 597—that is, for a century and a half—when all these changes were going on and England falling into chaos, we have very little record, and what we have is cloudy. Nevertheless we can fairly grasp the large lines of the affair by adding indirect to direct evidence. Of direct evidence we have, save for an inaccurate line or two in foreign chronicles, only one surviving document, the *Liber Querulus* of St Gildas, a priest from West England, who probably wrote as an exile in Brittany. He writes, of course, in Latin, and he has some acquaintance with the classics. He tells little, but he is at least contemporary, though very confused (for he was not writing history, but only an angry and exaggerated sermon, upbraiding certain kinglets of the West for their vices). This document is not later than 560, and was written by a man then mature and probably in middle age, if not older. His personal memories carry us back to shortly after the year 500. But, as he gives no figures, all these dates are approximate only, and to within an error of, say, thirty years. At any rate, Gildas was born at least half a lifetime after St Germanus’ last visit in 447, and wrote at least half a lifetime before civilization returns to England with the Roman Mission in 597. He comes, therefore, in the middle of that eclipse in English history between

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the end of direct Imperial rule and the beginnings of so-called 'Anglo-Saxon' England. Gildas writes partly of things before his birth, but mainly (and with more value) of things with which he was contemporary. He tells us that some kinglet, unnamed but presumably on the East Coast, hired a few of the pirates as mercenaries, that these rebelled against him and summoned others of their kindred to join them from overseas, and that these combined war bands looted the country badly, even getting to the western coast in some of their raids and sacking cities; that they retired with their loot, though some remained in the island—presumably on the East Coast—and that a British magnate bearing a Roman name, Ambrosius Aurelianus, gathered a force with which he defeated the remaining pirates at some unknown place called Mount Badon. Since that battle there had been a long peace, uninterrupted save by local wars between the little chieftains.

**Our Indirect Evidence.** Our indirect evidence of what happened between 447 and 597 during the eclipse in English history is of three kinds—that depending on our knowledge of what existed before and after the interval; that depending on tradition; and that depending on the analogy of the later Danish invasions on which we have full knowledge.

**Our Evidence from what existed before and after the Interval.** Our knowledge of what existed before and after the interval shows us two main things: (1) the structure or stuff of society in England had not changed between the time when England still lived her old life as a Roman province—447—and the time when the missionaries from Rome began reconverting the east of the island and reintroducing record and writing—597. The organization of society as a number of agricultural estates, worked mainly by slaves, remains the same. The public power still owns and controls many of these and the waste lands and forests. Many of the old district names survive, even in the east: Kent, Dorset, probably Lincoln, certainly Deira and Bernicia on the northern coasts. The towns are still in existence, most of them with their old names, and there is no record of the destruction of any one of them during the troubles. The approach from the Continent is by the same route—Boulogne to Richborough—and there is still a good deal of intercourse with Gaul, though probably not as much as before. (2) On the other hand, the political and religious state of England has changed very

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greatly in those hundred and fifty years. All fiscal connection with the Empire, even if it survived as late as 447, has long disappeared by 597. No taxes are paid to any Imperial authority nor any Imperial money received here in England. No title is given to anyone in Britain by Imperial authority. The Latin language, though still used for writing in the west of the island and in liturgy, has been generally replaced there by the Celtic dialects; in the east the courts, and probably the people, near the coast speak Teutonic dialects, and Latin is forgotten. There may still have been Celtic speech among them, for five hundred years later the Celtic names of places were well remembered.

The change in religion is still more marked. In 447 we find the usual late-Roman state of affairs in an outlying province. The official attitude is Christian, but a great number of Pagans remain. A new heresy forms the chief matter of public debate and importance. Presumably the bishoprics are organized thoroughly in Britain, as elsewhere throughout the Empire. By 597 all this is changed. The Christian religion is universal in the west of England, there are apparently no heresies or Pagans left, and the district is organized in bishoprics. But communication with the rest of Christendom seems to have ceased and a corresponding growth of local customs to have arisen. The extreme south-west, Cornwall and perhaps South Wales, were in touch with Christian Churches in Brittany. But of general communion with the Universal Church and its centre in Rome there is little vestige left. On the East and South Coasts—at least as far east as Dorsetshire and all the way up to the Firth of Forth—the bishoprics have disappeared, and the people and rulers are Pagan. There may have been some lingering remnants of Christian practice and doctrine, and we have mention of one church either surviving or restored to use in Kent, at Canterbury. But the masses and their governments have, so far as we know, fallen back to Paganism again.

A third most striking change is the disappearance and forgetting of provincial unity. In 447 Britain still appears as one province with Roman officials. There is no talk of local kings or chiefs independent of provincial rule. In 597 and onward all is under petty local kinglets, as has been described. No one governs Britain as a whole, though there is some echo of the old Roman *Dux Britanniarum* in the title *Bretwalda*, occasionally taken by some leading kinglet of the eastern kind, more powerful

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than his fellows. This break-up of all the island into a mass of small rude governments is the most striking example and proof of the decline which society had suffered in the hundred and fifty years. One point, however, it is most important to remember: the later Imperial idea of Sacred Monarchy survived here as elsewhere throughout the Roman Europe. These little kings were not mere heads of armed bands. They were real monarchs possessed of full authority, issuing laws, controlling their subjects, regarding each other as a caste of a special and superior kind.

**Our Evidence from the Analogy of the Danish Invasions.** Though we have so very little direct evidence on the raids and settlements of 450-550, we luckily have full and detailed evidence of another set of raids and settlements so like them that we can argue from one to the other. This other set are the so-called 'Danish' raids which also came over the North Sea two hundred years later—750-900. We know exactly what happened then, and we can fairly apply it to show what must have happened in the earlier time. The raiders came in boats carrying, on the average, about fifty fighting men each. They were therefore very few indeed compared with the native population. Their total numbers were never more than eight or ten thousand men at any one time, but they were very destructive, because society was not organized for resistance. They went far inland, even to the west of the island. They set up local courts. A certain remnant remained established in the island. But they were of no great effect upon the blood of the vast majority among which they found themselves, and they were absorbed.

**Summary.** It will be seen that all these various kinds of evidence converge to give us the result set forth above. There was no great change in race or in social custom due to the raids, nor any considerable settlement from over the North Sea in 450-550. On the other hand, religious organization was destroyed by the harrying of the East Coast, and the ruin spread to the Midlands. What was worst, the breakdown of England's communication with the Continent cut off the Christian West, and left it isolated from the rest of the Church and its high organization on the Continent of Europe. England, though still just in touch with the civilization of Europe by the south-east, was thus half barbarized and was in danger of falling into a still lower condition, when the process was reversed by the appearance in 597 of a band of missionaries sent by the Pope, who

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brought back to the east of the island the Mass, reading and writing and building, and all that remained of culture in what was still, in spite of its transformation and deep material decline, the Roman Empire.

**What had happened in the Rest of the Empire.** While Britain was thus cut off and in peril of withering out of Europe altogether and falling back into savagery, with even its Christian West starved of culture and its eastern coast and much of the Midlands fallen back to Paganism, the mass of Western Europe had also suffered a profound change. The Imperial power could no longer act directly in the West. Before the end of the fifth century, in 476, the Imperial symbols of the Western Emperor were sent back to the Eastern Emperor at Constantinople, who was henceforth the sole ruler. But he had no direct rule in France or in most of Spain, where government had been taken over by the local generals of auxiliary troops and their descendants. A Frankish ruler (Clovis) and his descendants so governed in Northern and Central France, a Burgundian in the south-east, and a Gothic in Southern France and most of Spain; a Vandal in Africa. Even in Italy a general of Gothic troops whom the Emperor had sent there made himself local ruler, and when Constantinople sent a new one *he* made *himself* in turn independent. Of course, the Emperor was acknowledged everywhere still, events were dated under his reign, his coinage circulated everywhere, Roman law was universal, as were the old scheme of taxes and tolls and the courts and the road system. But the taxes were gathered and spent by the local rulers. They heard the final appeals from the courts, and their orders were obeyed as though they were independent. The Emperor at Constantinople made a vigorous effort to recover direct rule over Italy, Spain, and Africa, but he only partly succeeded. The governors of North Italy fell again into the hands of a body of auxiliary troops, the Lombards, who could not be directly controlled from Constantinople; and of Spain the Emperor held but the south-east. Africa he recovered. What *did* more and more vigorously maintain the old idea of Roman unity and civilization in the West was the Catholic Church: the organization of which was the most powerful and living thing in all the Western World. It was through the Church thus acting in its new capacity of heiress to the old Direct Imperial Rule in the West, from the Adriatic to the

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Atlantic and from the Channel to the Sahara, that Britain was recovered for civilization during the seventh century (601-700). We must therefore understand what the structure and activity of the Church, under the Papacy, was at the date 596, when Pope Gregory the Great determined on sending to England the expedition which landed in the following year.

**Our Evidence from Tradition.** Tradition is that kind of evidence to a more or less distant past which is not written record, but stories handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. It is most valuable for giving us the general impression which men received of an event at the time and passed on to their descendants in tales and songs. It gets warped, however, with legends and marvels and exaggerations and downright inventions. We have a considerable mass of tradition upon what happened in England during these hundred and fifty years, 447-597, both from the Christian, Celtic-speaking extreme West—now called Wales—and from the Pagan, Teutonic-speaking East Coast; we have little tradition concerning the great Midland mass in between, but there is some from Ireland. Centuries later a lot of legends on the period were written down in what are now known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the Welsh chronicles, and the history called that of Nennius. Certain main facts emerge from all this mass of legend and fairy-tale and real memories. Some time in the later fifth century (450-500) the pirate raids from over the North Sea grew particularly bad: it may be that they got a special foothold from coming first as regularly hired mercenaries. They left a stronger impression than the raids from Ireland on the west and from the Highlands on the north. During the sixth century (500-550) the leaders established courts on the East Coast, to which they were thrown back by fighting Christian Western leaders, one of whom, Artorius (our Arthur), created a strong effect upon the people of his time. These raiders from over the North Sea came from the coasts between Holland and Denmark, and seem to have been recognized as of three kindred but separate kinds: Jutes (perhaps from Jutland), some of whom settled in Kent and in the Isle of Wight and up the Meon valley, in Hampshire; Saxons from round the mouth of the Elbe, who attacked the coasts of Sussex and Essex and sailed up the coastal rivers (perhaps up the Thames too); and Angles from the Bight of Heligoland, who

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attacked at various points between Essex and the extreme north. These last made a regular settlement on the sea-edges of Yorkshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk, perhaps Lincolnshire, and certainly Durham, Northumberland, and Berwickshire. The kinglets of the East Coast often claimed descent from the first leaders of their kinds, and usually liked (later) to trace their lineage from a mythical figure called Woden; and it is remarkable that the Midland kinglets with Celtic names—those at Winchester and round Lichfield, for instance—also later accepted the same custom. They did this probably because, when the East Coast, under the influence of the Roman missionaries, became the most civilized part of the island, it was an honour to claim common blood with the ruling families there.

### **The Church and Papacy in Western Europe (596).**

Religion was everywhere the great interest of men at this time. The Universal Church had become the life of the universal Empire. As the Empire had two main languages—Greek in the East (up to the Adriatic) and Latin in the West (from the Adriatic to the Atlantic)—so the liturgy of the Church had two main groups. The Mass was said in Greek over the greater part of the East. It was said in Latin over all the West. As Latin decayed in public use and fell into various popular dialects the Church kept up the standard Latin of the time of Constantine. When popular dialects, including Teutonic, African, and Celtic, had so generally replaced the old official Latin in daily conversation that they were the only common talk, and Western Europe was in language a hotchpotch of local speeches, often differing within a few miles, the standard Latin of the Church remained the preserver of unity in the West. All record, theological and political statement, charters, titles to land, diplomas of office, letters between rulers, were written in this language. The local rulers, descendants of tribal chieftains who had taken over government in the West when the Imperial Central government failed, had no national feeling. They all thought of themselves as part of the Empire still, and therefore the Church was superior to them as being the living soul of the Empire. Its authority was common to them all, acting as much over one as over another, and indifferent to their changing boundaries. The Church was governed by bishops, each supreme in his own diocese; and general doctrine and discipline were settled by gatherings of these bishops, often in local synods, sometimes

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when very great matters were concerned in General Councils. Among these bishops the Bishop of Rome had always been regarded from the earliest days as having Primacy. This was founded on Apostolic tradition, which was, of course, spread everywhere by speech and general communication ; but it also appeared in certain sentences of the fragmentary original records. By this tradition the Apostle Peter (who ended his career as a martyr in Rome under Nero) was held to be the chief of the Apostles. The feeling was reinforced by the presence together and common martyrdoms of him and of St Paul, the chief missionary and propagator of the Faith, in the capital of the world. The Episcopate, though each bishop was supreme in his own diocese, had degrees of power. The bishops of one region were gathered under a chief bishop in the principal town, an Archbishop, or *Metropolitan*; and these, again, were arranged in much larger groups under the bishops of towns very important either politically or from their history in the Church, such as Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome. These few super-eminent bishops were called *Patriarchs*.

Now, it is remarkable that, while the Greek, eastern half of the Empire had several Patriarchs, the Latin, western half had only *one*: the Bishop of Rome. This added greatly to his position. He was therefore the unique authority over the western part of the Church, with its Latin Mass and liturgy, while the eastern, with its Greek Mass and liturgy, was divided among a group. Again, the Emperor's having taken up his seat in Constantinople, Rome and its district was more and more administered by its Patriarch-Bishop, to whom also the easterners often had recourse and whom their councils treated as the chief of their order. After 476 Italy had no resident Emperor, but only his delegate in civil authority, the authority of this Ecclesiastical power became greater still. It had its court of appeal, records, and general machinery of government more and more developed. The Bishop of Rome was still a subject of the Emperor in Constantinople, but more and more did he replace, over the Latin West, the idea of the Emperor in men's minds. At this moment, 596, the office was held by one of the greatest figures in history, St Gregory I. He was born a great Roman noble in 540, had been made civil governor of the city, and, becoming a cleric, had been acclaimed Bishop by clergy and people in 590, his fiftieth year.

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**The Mission sent by St Gregory the Great to England (596-597).** It was the main business of the Church to consolidate and defend Christendom, and this involved two tasks: the saving of Christian Imperial society from degradation by heresy, and the defence and expansion of it by the conversion of such Paganism as lingered within civilization, as had grown up in the ravaged border districts (East England, the Netherlands, the Rhine, the Danube) or lived in proximity to the Empire just beyond its borders. Of these two tasks the Church in the West had accomplished the first by the time of St Gregory. It had been accelerated by the fact that nearly all France had fallen under the hands of a convert general, Clovis, a hundred years before. As we have seen, most of the soldiers and their leaders had followed the old court religion of Arianism, and this powerfully aided the decline of civilization by bringing in acute friction between the mass of the people and their governments. But Clovis, born a Pagan Frank, son of the Pagan Frankish general who had his headquarters at Tournai and guarded the lower Rhine frontiers, turned Catholic, and could therefore rely on the support of the populace and their bishops when he proceeded to oust the Arian Gothic generals of the south from their garrisons and government. This great Catholic power, with its centre at Paris and its officials and units and courts and recruitment of armies stretching almost to the boundaries of Italy, at times divided between members of the same house, then reunited, made the decay of Arianism certain: the Arian government of Spain gave way and became Catholic under St Gregory. Constantinople had long got rid of the Arian Vandal government in Africa and Gothic in Italy. The Lombard auxiliary troops and their leader, who had followed in Italy, had also been Arian. But they in turn accepted Catholicism, so that, by the mid-seventh century, just before the Mohammedan menace appeared, all the Latin West was free from heresy and formed once more a united culture.

But there still remained the task of recapturing the fringes where civilization had broken down on the edges of the Empire and where Paganism had re-entered with Barbarism. Of these fringes the most important was the eastern and south-eastern coast belt of Britain, because, so long as its little kinglets and their courts, their free subjects, and the mass of the slave population were Pagan, the rest of England was cut off from

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Europe, while the Christian faith and remnants of civilization in the west of the island were isolated and starved and threatened to dwindle, perhaps to die out. Therefore St Gregory, as the moral head of all the Western Empire, determined to recover all.

At first he thought of doing so by purchasing English Pagan slaves, training them in the Faith, and sending them back home as missionaries. Later he reconsidered this plan as insufficient, and determined on a full expedition. With that object he gave orders in 596 to the monk Augustine, prior of that monastery of St Andrew's in Rome which St Gregory himself had founded on the Cælian Hill, and had formerly ruled, to set out for England. The organization was considerable: some forty monks were to accompany Augustine, and a plan to be followed on their arrival was laid down. The moment was an excellent one for such an attempt. The kinglet of Kent, one Ethelbert, had been ruling many years in touch with the civilized and Catholic Continent. He was acknowledged as the chief among the many petty rulers, called a 'Bretwalda,' and had some sort of overlordship even as far as the confused middle of the island, along the Thames valley and to the south of it; and he was sufficiently important to have married, probably about twenty years earlier, the Catholic daughter (Bertha) of the great Frankish ruler in Paris, grandson to Clovis. She had brought with her to her husband's city of Canterbury a French bishop to be her chaplain, and she heard Mass in the church of St Martin there. The court as a whole remained Pagan, but it was well acquainted with the higher culture across the Channel. The missionaries halted before their journey was half accomplished. They dreaded its difficulties and sent their leader back to Rome to put them before Gregory, while they waited at Aix in Provence. Gregory urged Augustine to return. He and his spent the winter at Paris, where they picked up interpreters. In the spring of 597 they crossed the Straits of Dover and landed in Thanet, probably at the mouth of the Stour.

## II

# THE DARK AGES IN ENGLAND

FROM THE LANDING OF ST AUGUSTINE (597) TO THE  
BATTLE OF HASTINGS (1066)

## THE SEVENTH CENTURY: ENGLAND IS RESTORED TO CHRISTENDOM

**Nature of the Dark Ages.** Very roughly, the old Græco-Roman Pagan civilization may be regarded as sunk from the year 500 so far as all Europe is concerned. It was from the beginning of our era till that date, for five centuries, in slow process of conversion to Catholicism. Its high culture and achievement in all the arts broke down from old age in the third and fourth centuries. The Faith was growing within it all the while, but came too late to save it fully. When the Catholic Church had become the religion of the Empire—after 300—it saved all that could be saved of our culture; but decline had gone too far to be arrested, though the new and vigorous religion proceeded to reanimate our world.

From 300 to 500 all the material side of human life in Europe decayed, while the vision of spiritual things broadened. After 500 Europe enters into a phase which lasts five hundred years and which has been called the Dark Ages. Civilization endured: but it was no longer ordered by one central government, nor in full touch throughout all its parts. Science declined, much of history was forgotten. There arose in the East a heresy which soon became a new religion, that of Mohammed. It invaded Christendom in arms, and attempted to destroy it. It overran all Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa, and nearly all Spain. It threatened to overwhelm us (630–730), and remained our most powerful menace for centuries. It was staved off by the united rule (over the West) of Charlemagne, who was called Emperor again (800) and was thought able to restore the old civilization. He could not do so, and after his death (814) there began a sort of siege of Christendom—that is, of the

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remains of civilized Europe. The Scandinavian Pagan pirate pressed in from the north-east, Mongols along the Danube; and the Mohammedan was everywhere our superior on his frontiers. During the worst moment—say, 850–950—the “darkness of the ninth century,” we barely survived. But the long effort at resistance succeeded. Civilization gradually recovered its foothold. The Pagan assault was thrust back; the Scandinavian pirates were absorbed into Christendom; so were the Mongol hordes on the Danube. The struggle to recover Spain from the Mohammedan began, starting from the valleys of the Pyrenees. By the year 1000 the forward movement had begun and the tide had turned. But in those long five hundred years very much of letters and record was lost, no great buildings arose, and our fathers, absorbed in battle, barely preserved us, making no advance.

England was spared all the struggle of the Dark Ages *except* a most grievous, special, and long-enduring attack upon her of the pirate Pagans from Scandinavia. These (from 800 to 1000) first raided the wealth of the country and, though in small numbers, badly degraded its life by their assaults. Later, England converted them—only gradually and most tardily—to Catholicism. The pirates, once they were Christian, even imposed some of themselves as kings over England, and one such Barbarian was reigning here when the Dark Ages were ending and the fullness of the Middle Ages was arising.

Happily, before the strain began, England, which had all but been lost to Christendom and civilization when the central rule of the Roman Emperors broke down, was slowly recovered and joined to Europe again, given back the essentials of our culture on the initiative of the Roman Bishop.

**The Recovery of England begins.** The recovery of England, the reconversion of the Pagan East Coast to Catholicism, the reintroduction there of the Mass, reading and writing, architecture, record, and all the apparatus of civilization, the consequent opening up of communications with the starved and isolated Christian West of the island, was a long business of over a hundred years.

It begins with St Augustine's landing in the spring of 597. It is not concluded until Sussex and the Isle of Wight are fully evangelized, a state they can hardly have reached earlier than

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700, and the final date is the death of that great organizer St Wilfrid, in 709.

There are three main events deciding the course of this revolution: (1) The *Refusal*—that is, the refusal of the warped and isolated Christian bishops of the West to aid the new Roman mission to the East Coast. This happened at the very origin of the affair (in 604), and deflects the whole story of England, making the recovery of civilization advance from the East Coast westward, instead of the other way about, from west to east, as it should normally have done and actually did in all the rest of Europe. (2) The *Council of Whitby*, in which the customs of the Irish missionaries who had evangelized the North gave way to the Roman discipline. This took place a lifetime after St Augustine, in 664. It was of the highest consequence, determining the future language of the island by sapping Western and Celtic-speaking influences. (3) The *work of St Theodore of Tarsus*, who was sent by the Pope to organize the recovery of the British province. On the foundations laid down by St Theodore the unity of England gradually arose, and its full contact with Europe was assured. His work began in 668, and was continued by St Wilfrid till 709. The wars and alliances of the little kings, and the shifting boundaries of their petty districts, have slight interest for English history. The great event of that seventh century for England was the religious one, whereby the first seeds of a single nation were sown, and the direction English institutions and language were to take was decided by the nature of the religious settlement. Both institutions and language were profoundly changed in the succeeding centuries, especially by the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Black Death in 1348, and the Reformation after 1525. The judicial and political framework dates from the Conquest; the language now called English dates from the Black Death. But that English is spoken in Devon to-day and that the Crown of England symbolizes one united people are ultimately due to the missionary work undertaken by St Augustine, the agent of Pope Gregory, and concluded by St Theodore, the agent of Pope Vitalian.

**St Augustine and his Companions. The Failure of the Western British Bishops.** St Augustine and his monks were well received by Ethelbert, the kinglet of Kent. Though he had known the Church all his life and was neighbour to it at half a day's sailing, he had taken hitherto no step towards it beyond

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his marriage. But he knew now, grown elderly, that it must come. He was baptized on Whit Sunday, 597. Such was the prestige given to monarchy by the Roman tradition that even a king on this small scale decided the issue for his people, and the Kentish freemen and much more numerous slaves were baptized in shoals: ten thousand of them in the Swale on Christmas Day, among other occasions. Augustine went back to France to be consecrated bishop, returned, and was joined by three more agents sent from Italy by the Pope—Justin, Mellitus, and Paulinus. They brought with them as a symbol of Augustine's Archbishopric the pallium sent by the Pope. It was a consecrated shoulder-piece of white wool, which in later times shrank to be no more than a stole. Its possession was the mark of Primacy at Canterbury for more than nine hundred years. Justin, Mellitus, and Paulinus also brought the Pope's orders for a new English hierarchy. It was, presumably, an attempted restoration of the scheme which had existed in this country when the united and centralized Roman Empire was flourishing. There were to be two Metropolitan sees, at London and York, each with a province of twelve dioceses. It apparently might be taken for granted that the remaining bishops of Western Britain would help the work of restoring civilization and would spread it, and the Faith, under St Augustine's leadership, throughout the island. They were only seven in number, it seems. The rest of the dioceses had been wiped out in the turmoil of those two hundred years of raids and decline. But those seven bishops and their Christian priests might rally to the re-establishment of society in the ravaged eastern part of the island. That is what had happened elsewhere. The civilized parts helped the recovery of the neighbouring places that had fallen back into barbarism during the troubles of the Empire. St Augustine met them at some unknown place in the south middle of England, perhaps at Cricklade, perhaps on the Severn, and was surprised to hear them refuse.

In their long isolation the British bishops in the West had not followed the change of the calendar; they kept Easter at a different date from the rest of the Church, and there had grown up or been handed down minor difficulties of local custom, as in the tonsure and the rite of baptism, which could perhaps have been arranged. But the fixed mood of the Westerners was against union. At a second meeting in the following year

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they finally refused to co-operate with St Augustine's mission for the recovery of eastern, devastated England. The result was that the whole vast force of the Universal Church was thrown in favour of the eastern courts of England. After the Council of Whitby, of which we shall hear in a moment, the process increased. The full driving-power of civilization was to spread henceforward westward from York and Canterbury; with it the Teutonic dialects of the East Coast spread more and more westward, and the Celtic in the south and west continued to dwindle and shrink. The little realms of the eastern kinglets expanded westward; their influence and alliances set the fashion for the Midlands; and at last, after many generations, only the Welsh mountains and the distant moors of West Devon and Cornwall retained the ancient Celtic speech of the island.

**Partial Success and Death of St Augustine and the Kinglet of Kent, Ethelbert.** St Augustine firmly founded the see of Canterbury, and he civilized Kent. That was the essential act in the recovery of the ruined part of Britain and its reunion with Europe. But the refusal of the Western bishops and their lingering and decayed civilization to help him spoilt St Gregory's scheme. St Augustine had to act piecemeal, tentatively, from Canterbury, instead of organizing a grand scheme from London for the whole island. He founded a second see at Rochester, where he put in Justin as bishop. The little chieftain who presided over the old tribal land of the Trinobantes (his court was called East Saxon) happened to be a nephew of the kinglet of Kent. So he accepted baptism; and the great port of London had a see founded in it, and Mass was said there once more in a church dedicated to St Paul. The country to the north, the old tribal land of the Iceni (later called after the court of the East Angles and divided into North-folk and South-folk), received a slight touch of the new civilizing influence; the head kinglet of the district consented to be baptized, but remained half Pagan. When St Augustine died, in 604, little had been accomplished, for the refusal of the Western bishops to help had spoilt everything. After his death the now baptized King of Kent, Ethelbert, lived on twelve years (till 616), and he had such prestige through his marriage with the great house of Paris and his new acceptance of civilization that so long as he lived he could sustain the difficult effort to recover Britain. But after his death the missionaries were driven

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out of London and Rochester. Only Canterbury remained, and even there a bad quarrel arose between the late King's son (who had not been baptized) and the new missionary Archbishop from Italy, Laurentius. But the tide of civilization was flowing, and, balked at one place, it pushed in at another.

**Edwin of Northumbria.** Thus one of these little warring chieftains, a certain Edwin, heir to the Angle strip along the coast north of Humber and the Yorkshire Plain, was sent to the court of a Welsh chieftain, to be in safety from one Æthelfrith, who ruled in Northumbria. There he became acquainted with the Mass and the remaining civilized tradition of the West. He came back east, was befriended by the little kinglet of Norfolk and Suffolk, met and killed Æthelfrith in a battle on the river Idle in the year after Ethelbert's death (617), and became, still young, King over the North-east. Because he was now Christian and civilized he acquired power. He married the daughter of Ethelbert of Kent, a granddaughter of the great French kings, and that made him more important among the other petty rulers. Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, sent Paulinus, one of the original missionaries of Augustine's mission, to be Edwin's bishop at York, and the North thus began to be restored to civilization. Edwin had the Roman insignia of a governor of Britain borne before him, and it is also interesting to find that during the missionizing and baptizing of the North the governor of Lincoln still bears the Roman title of prefect. Edwin was so powerful that he began to spread the Faith and civilization in the broken-down middle parts of England; he got the kinglet of the Mid-Thames and Hampshire people (the Gewissæ was their local name, as we have seen) to acknowledge him overlord, and later this chieftain—who had the Celtic name of Cynegils—was also baptized. So was the King of Norfolk and Suffolk, who had got a smattering of civilization during an exile in France, and who brought a French bishop over for his district. Altogether it looked as though about 630 Edwin would restore civilization to all Eastern Britain by his influence. But his power provoked attack; a Welsh chieftain called Cadwallon joined forces with one of the Pagan chiefs in the still Pagan Midlands (a warrior with the probably Celtic name of Penda). They attacked Edwin, and killed him at Hatfield, near Doncaster, in 633.

**Recovery in the North. Battle of the Winwaed (654).** But the recovery of Britain for civilization could not be halted

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by one defeat. The pressure from those who were still Pagan, allied with the western isolated Christians who had objected to St Augustine's mission and wished to remain independent, did not last much more than twenty years. The kinglet of Northumbria, Oswy, defeated Penda and the Midland Pagans in the battle of the Winwaed, near Leeds, in the Pennines, in 654. Never after this date did the recalcitrant Christians of the West or what was left of Pagans in the island achieve any success against the advancing general civilization which the Church, under the direct influence of Rome, was bringing back to England, and spreading westward.

**St Wilfrid and the Council of Whitby (664).** There were, however, two doubtful points remaining in this new state of affairs. First, what kind of language would gradually spread throughout the whole island; and, second, much more important, the unity of religious administration in the island. Although important writings were, of course, in Latin, the common dialects over the greater part of the island were Celtic—that is, of the same sort as Welsh and Gaelic are to-day; while on the eastern coasts of the island and farther inland in the south the common dialects were of a Teutonic sort like Dutch and called Angle or Saxon. We find the Celtic dialects as far east as Leeds at this time, in the north: how far east they went in the south we do not know. But at any rate the whole island was divided between the two kinds of speech, and the greater part of it was Celtic-speaking. Now, the Church, bringing back civilization to England under the direction of Rome, had failed, as we have seen, with the western Celtic-speaking people, who had preferred to go on in their isolation, keeping Easter at a different time and varying in other minor points from the mass of Christendom. Moreover, the northern part of the East Coast had been evangelized from Celtic sources by enthusiastic Celtic monks, largely of Irish tradition, rather than by the Roman missionaries; King Oswy himself had got his religion from them. But to remain part of an isolated and decaying community was not attractive. Full communion with Rome and the practice of the universal Church in direct touch with the Pope was the mark of belonging to civilization in general. The quarrel was settled by a council which King Oswy called at Whitby, ten years after the battle of the Winwaed, in 664. The great figure in this council was St Wilfrid, the Abbot of Ripon,

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a man native to England but trained in Rome and Lyons. He persuaded King Oswy and his court to adopt the full Roman fashion. Some of the Celtic missionaries went away, but one of them, Tuda, conformed and was made bishop. Such as were still backward and schismatic in the Midlands and the rest of the North submitted; and henceforward it was certain that a Catholic culture in full communion with Rome and forming part of all Christendom would advance westward rapidly throughout the island. On account of this it was certain that the Angle and Saxon dialects which had been talked in the east, where the Roman missionaries had had their chief successes and where the great figure of St Wilfrid had appeared, would also spread westward.

**Theodore of Tarsus.** After the Council of Whitby Tuda died, and the natural person to succeed him was St Wilfrid. Now, St Wilfrid could not be consecrated bishop by the Primate of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, for the last holder of that office had died and had not been replaced. So St Wilfrid went over to France and was consecrated there, at Compiègne; but for some unknown reason, perhaps because St Wilfrid was slow in returning, King Oswy (now old) grew angry with him and appointed in his place a priest, probably Celtic, called Chad, a very holy man. The Pope of the day, Vitalian, saw to it that these troubles should be ended. He did so by organizing once and for all the Church in England, and for that purpose he sent a very able, vigorous, and learned man from the Greek-speaking East of the Roman Empire, from Tarsus, St Paul's town. This man, Theodore of Tarsus, whom the Pope made Archbishop of Canterbury, should be remarked as one of the most important in the history of England; for he established here not only the full organization of the Church, but a tradition of culture, founding schools and introducing a knowledge of Greek. He reconciled Wilfrid with Oswy, who died in 671. In 673 Theodore of Tarsus called together the first ecclesiastical synod held in Britain, at Hertford. It established canons—that is, ecclesiastical rules—on the lines of all the rest of Christendom, and, what is most important, it divided England into a regular number of dioceses. Theodore divided the great diocese of York into two (thereby clashing again with St Wilfrid, who went off to Rome, and there got the Pope to support him). He also established a bishopric as far west as Hereford; two in East Anglia;

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and altogether when the work was finished, half a lifetime after the death of Theodore, England was regularly parcelled out into seventeen organized bishoprics. St Wilfrid, during the journeys provoked by his troubles, had evangelized Sussex, the last Pagan part of the country; and when St Theodore died in 690 all England was Catholic and in communion with Rome. The recalcitrant western part, confined to what is now Wales, Devon, and Cornwall, and most of the Scottish Lowlands, gradually came into line, but by exactly what steps we do not know. St Wilfrid died in 709, and by that time, although the bishoprics had not yet been exactly divided, the main work was accomplished.

Thus we may say roughly that the seventh century (601-700) was the century in which England was restored to civilization through the action of the Roman Church: (a) evangelizing first the East Coast and then the Midlands, teaching them to write and build and all the rest of it; (b) mastering the isolated and withered old dioceses of the West, where decaying remains of the old culture lingered; (c) spreading westward the Teutonic language of the little courts in which it had first begun to work.

### THE EIGHTH CENTURY: ENGLAND BEGINS TO GET TOGETHER

**Ina and Offa.** In the eighth century (701-800) the little separate chieftaincies began gradually to coalesce. One petty local ruler would emerge as specially important, then another. The Church, with its councils for the whole of the island, except the Scottish mountains, gave a certain unity to society, and contact with Europe was fully re-established. But there was no united political control, for the effects of the bad breakdown between 400 and 500 were still being felt more than two centuries later.

In culture the country had very largely recovered. There were great monasteries everywhere, schools and a true knowledge of Latin (which was used in all the main documents), a close and continuous connection with the rest of Christendom, and especially with Rome. England even produced at this moment an outstanding European figure in literature, the Venerable Bede, a Northumbrian monk who wrote a history from which we have most of our knowledge of England at that

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time. But one common rule over the whole country was very slow in coming, and that, of course, made it weak and backward, compared with the great kingdom of France, which was ruled by the descendants of Clovis, the Roman general of Frankish birth who with his followers had taken over government in the breakdown three hundred years before. Although England was no longer broken up into half a hundred little warring districts, as it had been before St Augustine's landing, there was still a number of separate kings, independent one of the other; and that is why this time, round about 700 to 850, used to be called the Heptarchy (a Greek word meaning 'seven kingdoms'). Of these separate rulers the most important were two, for the North had declined in power. These two were the principal chieftain in the south, who had his court at Winchester, and the principal chieftain in the Midlands, whose court was not permanently fixed in any one place, but commonly returned to or was connected with Lichfield, which, on account of St Chad's having gone there after York, had acquired a leading position.

Winchester was the capital of a large district which at first bore the ancient native name of Gewissæ and was later known as Wessex; and the first king who comes into prominence there is one of the name of Ina, who is found ruling in 689 and carried on for the best part of forty years. His name must be remembered because it was Wessex in the long-run which became the most important of the English kingdoms, and the kings of Wessex who ultimately became the kings of all England. Ina fixed his frontiers as far west as Exeter, beyond which the Welsh-speaking inhabitants were independent of him; and he fortified Taunton as a frontier post. It is an interesting example of how slowly the Saxon language spread westward to see that in his time (689-726) there were plenty of Welsh-speaking people about the court of Wessex and presumably in Winchester itself.

After Ina the most important of the petty kings in England was Offa, in the Midlands. He also established a definite frontier against the Welsh, marking it with a great trench which can still be traced, called Offa's Dyke. And it looked as though he would be able to unite England under one hand, but he did not quite succeed. This man Offa seized power and became great in England half a lifetime after the death of Ina of Wessex, in 757.

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**Charlemagne.** While these things were going on in England, which still counted for very little in the affairs of Christendom, a very important thing had taken place in Europe; it was the rise to universal power of a family which at last refounded for a moment Imperial unity in the West. This family was a family of French nobles from the southern part of France, the Narbonne. It had acquired vast wealth in the shape of great landed estates in all parts of Christendom between Spain and the Rhine; it became more powerful than the kings who still ruled in France as the descendants of Clovis. At first, though more powerful, the heads of this family only called themselves the first ministers of the kings; but they ruled in fact, and the kings were kept more and more in the background, until at last the new family took over the kingship themselves.

What made leadership particularly important was that in their time came that double onslaught on our Christian civilization; first the attack of the Mohammedans on the south and against the Roman Empire in the East; and then, after that, the attack of the heathen northern pirates, as well as of heathens from the eastern middle of Europe. The Mohammedans were at first by far the greater danger. They started, as we have seen, under Mohammed, in Arabia, just outside the boundary of Christendom, in the deserts. He simplified the Christian religion, as so many of the leaders of heresy have done, denying the Divinity of our Lord, though continuing to regard him as the greatest Prophet. He also got rid of the priesthood and of Sacraments and of the Mass, and, what was much more important for the success of the new movement, all slaves who would join it were set free and the debts of all debtors were cancelled. When, therefore, the Mohammedans began an armed invasion of the Roman Empire the slaves (who were the great majority of the population), and all such freemen as were in debt or quarrelling with the official Church on account of its power, tended to join them. They swept over Palestine and Syria and Egypt and all North Africa, which till then had been part of the Roman Empire and the full Christian civilization; they came across the Straits of Gibraltar and overran Spain, which they conquered; and they even penetrated into the very middle of France, so that it looked at one moment—about 730—as though they would wipe out our civilization altogether, though they had not as yet attacked Rome, the centre of that civilization.

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When the Mohammedans had got as far as Central France the head of this family of great nobles in France, a certain Charles, led the Christian armies and beat back the Mohammedan invasion in a great battle between Tours and Poitiers, twenty years before Offa had arisen in the Midlands of England. This victory made Charles (nicknamed Martel, 'the Hammer') the real head of Christendom; his son Pepin took over the actual kingship of France, including the Christian districts up to the Rhine and somewhat beyond the river (North Germany was still Pagan); and of Pepin's sons one, also called Charles, succeeded his father in 768.

By his energy and the great resources he commanded he took over the defence of our civilization, which was then so heavily menaced, not only by the Mohammedans, but by the heathen Germans called Saxons<sup>1</sup> beyond the Rhine, and even by certain Mongols who had got as far as Hungary. He maintained a successful defence, preventing the Mohammedans from getting north of the Pyrenees again, keeping most of the valley of the Ebro Christian, and all Catalonia, and, what was most important, civilizing by force and conquering the heathen North Germans or Saxons. He baptized them in masses by force after his victories and established garrisons and bishoprics among them, so that, as the main effect of his victories, the Germans as a whole for the first time entered into the body of Christendom—an event of permanent effect upon Europe.

Just at this time the Pope, who had been for centuries the most important power in the West, separated Rome from the allegiance of the Roman Empire in Constantinople; for the Roman Emperor there had turned heretic and attacked the Church. The Pope, Leo III, crowned Charles, who had so long been King over France and the valley of the Rhine and the Germanies, and who had also taken over the northern part of Italy (the southern part was still ruled from Constantinople), and on Christmas Day of the year 800 in St Peter's at Rome declared him Emperor of the West. Thus was restored the idea

<sup>1</sup> This word 'Saxon' is very misleading, because it was used (a) vaguely, (b) with different meanings in different places and times. It did not originally apply to a race or speech, but became a general name for Northern Germans, after having been attached at first to only a small part of them, along the North Sea. Some think it came from the use of a particular weapon, but no one knows. In England it was used side by side with the words 'Engle' and 'Angle' to mean (at first) the courts of the eastern kinglets who spoke Teutonic dialects.

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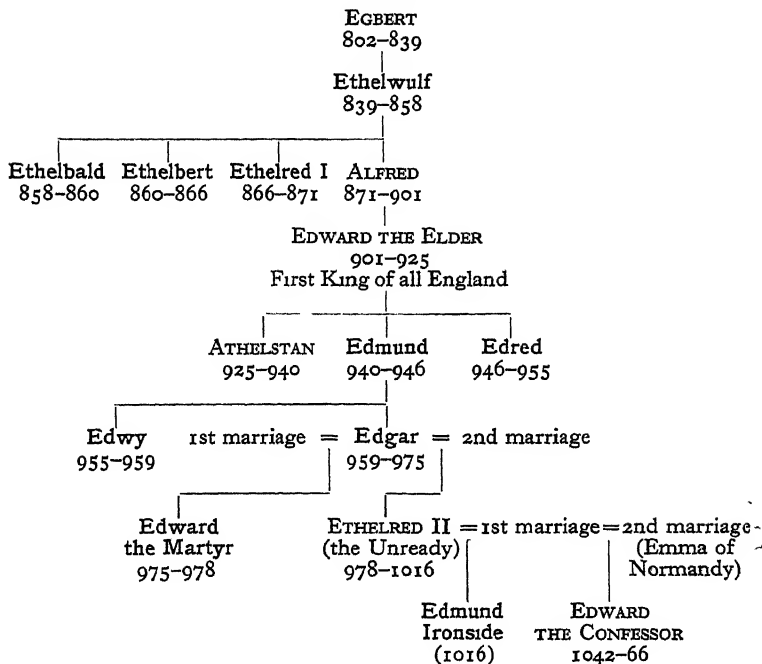
of Imperial unity, of which only the name and shadow had been worshipped during all the three centuries since direct rule from Rome had broken down in France, Britain, the Rhine valley, and Italy. Charles held this great position, the memory of which was never lost, until his death in 814, and he has remained known to England as Charlemagne. Though he never exercised direct power over England, he regarded himself in some vague way as suzerain of the island.

This experiment at resurrecting Imperial power in Western Europe never really succeeded. After Charlemagne's death the title of Emperor was kept up, but the local kings in Western Europe, notably the kingship which gradually arose in Paris, became independent in all but name. Nevertheless the great effect of Charlemagne remained, and Western Europe, already welded into one unity by the Papacy, with one central rite—the Latin Mass—felt itself to be one thing. And England was, of course, a part of that unity. All Latin Christendom stood together henceforward as a single thing. We call it Latin because its central rite—the Mass—was said in Latin throughout the West, and because Latin was the universal tongue for all important documents, chronicles, laws, and the rest. Of course, the eastern part, where the Mass was said in Greek and where the Emperor at Constantinople continued to rule, was also part of Christendom, and was regarded as such by the West; they made common cause against the Mohammedan and the heathen; but there was such a separation between the two parts in language and habits that they could not be completely one, and there was never henceforward full and unquestioned acknowledgment in the East of the old supremacy of the Pope, the chief Bishop, in Rome. Moreover, the fact that the Mohammedans had acquired power over Africa and Spain and Syria, and were always threatening the capital, Constantinople, itself, made the power of the Emperor in Constantinople decline. England, standing remote in the north-west, had not felt the pressure of the Mohammedans at all; but the pressure of the heathens was to come upon her later on, in a very menacing form which nearly destroyed English civilization again, as we shall see when we come to the reign of Egbert of Wessex.

**Offa.** After Ina in Wessex, Offa ruled in Mercia, and was the principal man in England for nearly forty years, from 757 to 796; upon the throne of Wessex was one of his sons-in-law,

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## THE KINGS FROM EGBERT



Brithric, and another of his sons-in-law was the King of the North, in York. Offa's power in England was, as will be seen by the date, contemporary with the rise to full sovereignty over all Western Europe of Charlemagne, whose position I have just described. There is no doubt that the great example of Charlemagne inspired Offa in his small way, as it did a number of other local leaders throughout Europe, and Offa's thirty-nine years of power are marked by new features, foreshadowing and leading up to, though not yet achieving, a united kingship over all England. A Church council, to which Charlemagne sent a representative of his own, crowned Offa's son solemnly during his father's lifetime; that was just what was being done on the Continent at the same time, and was always the first step towards starting a regular national dynasty.

Another name to be remembered in connection with this time

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as well as Offa's is that of a man much greater than himself and much better known throughout Europe, the scholar Albinus, who was also known as Alcuin; he was much the same age as Offa, and came from York. This Englishman Alcuin, returning from Rome, met Charlemagne, and was taken into his court to be the principal scholar there and had great influence upon the culture of the time.

**Egbert.** At this point in the history of England, 802, comes a landmark. There appears a man who is the known ancestor of all native kings to the Conquest and the first one to stand, before his death, for the unity of Britain. Before him you only have chieftains, many half mythical. After him you have true kings who come to rule all England.

Six years after Offa's death this Egbert, who had always claimed the throne of Winchester, in the South, and who had taken refuge at the court of Charlemagne, got his opportunity by the death of Brithric, Offa's son-in-law, the former King of Winchester. Egbert made himself King of Wessex, and maintained his power in another long reign of thirty-seven years, till 839. He is the first certain ancestor, not only of the pre-Conquest native kings, but, through his female descendants, the ancestor of all English kings after Henry I. The chief interest of his reign is that it corresponded with the beginning of that heathen onslaught upon English civilization which is called the Danish invasions.

### THE NINTH CENTURY: THE DANISH INVASIONS —FIRST PHASE (801-900)

**Divisions of the Danish Invasions.** The Danish invasions cover nearly two hundred years. They cannot be said to be over until Canute, a Dane, becomes king of all England in 1016; and if we count in the Danish kings after him the whole period covers quite two hundred years, for the last Danish King of England did not die until 1042. But they are not all one kind of thing, for they fall into two very distinct parts. During the first half it is a struggle between England, a province of Christendom, and wild heathen pirates who only came here to loot and destroy. They weaken England terribly and go a long way towards wiping out civilization; but in 879, thirty-nine years after the beginning of the pest, they are defeated, and by

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the Treaty of Wedmore begin to accept the Catholic faith, to be baptized, and to enter into European civilization. This happens under the Wessex King, Alfred. After Alfred for about a hundred years (the tenth century, 901-1000) there was a period during which the country from which these heathen pirates had come (which to-day we call Norway and Denmark) turned Christian, largely through the efforts of Englishmen. But hardly had the Danes become Christian and begun to be civilized before their kings tried to establish themselves in England as Christian rulers. This second part of the business begins with the battle of Maldon in 991, and it goes on until the death of the last Danish King in England in 1042. Up to Maldon it was a struggle of our civilization with barbarians who threatened its destruction, but after Maldon there was less distinction of civilization and barbarian, and it was rather a struggle as to who should be kings of England and enjoy the revenues of the government of the country—in which struggle Danish chieftains made themselves the masters. But from about 1000 onward the Danes were Catholic, like everybody else, and if they had established themselves permanently no great harm would have happened to England, though the country would have remained of little weight in Europe. The life-and-death struggle, therefore, was in the early part, in which English civilization very nearly went down again as it had gone down three hundred years before when similar pirate raids were sweeping the country.

**Nature of the Danish Invasions.** This new batch of pirates, whom the English called Danes but who on the Continent were usually called "men from the North" or Northmen, were never very numerous.

They were bands of adventurers starting out from the fjords—that is, the deep, narrow mountain bays of Norway—and also from Denmark, coming over the sea before the north-east winds in the spring, with no idea but raiding and looting. We have already seen what this trouble was like when dealing with the end of Roman Britain. The pirates came in boats which held on the average about fifty fighting men, though a very large boat might hold eighty. Even a big swarm of them would hardly bring as many as 8000 fighters. But as there was no organized force with which to meet them, nor any warning of their approach, and as at first their only object was to destroy and rob, they could do great damage. The reason they came so late

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was that they had been stirred up by the advance of Charlemagne with his great armies of Frenchmen and Rhinelanders into Pagan Germany, which lay close to the Danes and was barbaric as they were. This pushing of civilization up into their world exasperated and infuriated them, and it also showed them their chance of enriching themselves by robbery. They had already appeared in 787, and made a terrible raid upon the monastery of Lindisfarne in 793; but these were isolated adventures: the real attack came now, much later, just after the death of Egbert, in 840. We must remember that these pirate attacks were all part of the big attack which Christian Europe was receiving on all sides. Mongols were attacking through the centre of the Continent; Mohammedans were attacking through Spain; and these Norwegian and Danish pirates were attacking everywhere—Ireland, the north-east coasts of Britain, the French and English sides of the Channel and the northern Atlantic coasts of France, and the new Christian settlements which Charlemagne had founded in North Germany.

**Ethelwulf.** Egbert's son was called Ethelwulf. He was a man of very noble character and particularly pious. It was good fortune for England when the first great blows of the new pirate invasions fell that there should have been such a man accepted as the general head of the local chieftains. Already in his father Egbert's time they had come to the island of Sheppey, on the coast of Kent, and also to Charmouth, in Dorset; and a large body of them had in 838, just before Egbert died, come round from Ireland and marched up from Cornwall towards Devon, where Egbert had defeated them outside Plymouth. But with Ethelwulf the thing became more serious.

Ethelwulf comes to the throne when his father Egbert dies in 839. The very next year, in 840, about a thousand of the pirates came into Southampton Water. They were beaten off, but they seized Portland Bill for a while, and the local governor of Dorset was killed. This was the first time since Sheppey that they had held even for a short time any English soil. The next year they came into the Wash, invaded Lincolnshire, and defeated the local governor; and the year after they came into the Thames and the Medway, while others of them on the other side of the Channel were looting the French coast. In 843 they again attacked Dorset from the Channel. Then for over seven years they were spending their energies outside England,

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especially in the great raid on Hamburg, the new Christian town and bishopric which Charlemagne had founded in Germany. But in 851 they came again, in what was for them a very great force, perhaps as many as 10,000. They sacked Canterbury; they then sailed up the Thames and ravaged London, and for the first time ventured a considerable march inland. They came down the Roman road, called the Stane Street, which ran from London to Chichester; but when they had got as far as Ockley, in Surrey, just beyond Dorking, Ethelwulf, who had been marching from the west up the old British road, called the Pilgrims' Way, which cut the Roman road at Dorking, met them and gave battle. And in this battle of Ockley the Danish host was wiped out.

We shall notice as we read of the Danish invasions how every special effort of the pirates ended in some crushing disaster. That was probably because the rulers of England were able after some little time to gather much larger forces and to make certain of victory. But the thing was an abomination and a plague. The savages were horribly cruel, and had a stupid lust for destruction such as young children show. Every new blow further weakened the country, until people became almost used to the terror of the looting and burning and the rest, and under such anarchy civilization grew more and more in peril. After their great defeat at Ockley the pirates left England alone for some time, and Ethelwulf reigned in peace. He had four living sons, the youngest of whom was to be the famous Alfred. And Ethelwulf, who was always in close touch with Rome—the centre of civilization—sent there the little boy Alfred when he was only four years old, and took him again three years later when he himself visited the Pope. These journeys of little Alfred to Rome are important, because they impressed his memory and made him zealous in the task of his manhood, which was the saving of English civilization. Ethelwulf died in the year 858.

**The Battle of Ashdown.** Ethelwulf's three elder sons reigned thirteen years, during which the pirates attacked continually. In 860 they boldly came inland from Southampton Water and looted Winchester. In 865 they began a prolonged effort which lasted half a dozen years. A body of them actually spent the whole winter in Thanet, regularly settling themselves down. They raided East Anglia, and started a new tactic by

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using horses so that they could get far inland—an innovation which was to add greatly to their power for evil-doing—and their raids were more and more successful in the North. They wintered in England, they took York, they made the English chieftains of the North their vassals; and when the third son of Ethelwulf, now chief King in England and active head of Wessex, marched against them in 866 he could at first do nothing. He besieged them in Nottingham without result, and had to make a sort of truce. But their power not only continued, but expanded. They destroyed the venerable and wealthy monastery of Croyland, and went about massacring women and children and destroying everything by fire. They got hold of young Edmund, the King of East Anglia (that is, Norfolk and Suffolk), destroying his bands at Hoxon, on the Waveney, and then massacred him in the most hideous fashion because he would not become their vassal, refusing to serve heathen men.

On account of this martyrdom St Edmund was venerated by all our fathers for hundreds of years as one of the greatest of English names; between three and four hundred years ago this memory of St Edmund was crushed out by the Reformation governments, but the town where he was buried and where his shrine was is still called Bury St Edmunds. This martyrdom of St Edmund was in 870, and in 871 what was perhaps the greatest host which the Danes had yet assembled—and one now regularly settled and planted in England—came south to destroy what was left; that is, England south of the Thames, called Wessex. This they did not quite succeed in doing, for happily they were checked by a victory which the Christian English won somewhere in the Valley of the White Horse, known as the battle of Ashdown. Just after this the third of Ethelwulf's sons who had been King of Wessex died, and the fourth, who had distinguished himself especially at Ashdown, young Alfred, was chosen King and leader by acclamation.

**Alfred.** Alfred's reign (871-900) is the most important period in the Dark Ages of English history. It marks the turning-point in the Danish invasions, and also the making of England into one realm; and, again, the beginning of an official or national language, used in documents and standing side by side with Latin. Of these three characteristics of the reign of Alfred the first is the most important, for if the heathen pirates had crushed out our civilization—as they came very near to

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doing—it would have affected the rest of Christendom, which was being heavily pressed by barbarism on the north and east and by the Mohammedans from the south. In fact, Western Christendom had become a sort of fortress, besieged on all sides, and was reduced to the north and centre of Italy, France, a strip of Northern Spain, England and Ireland, and the valley of the Rhine, with the recently converted and half-civilized German band to the east of that valley. If, out of this limited territory, the British islands had been swept away the shock would have been severe and might have been final.

The second point, the uniting of England into one realm, was due to the Danish invasions and Alfred's character combined. For the Danish invasions destroyed the half-independent kingships of the Midlands and of East Anglia and of the North; and that made the whole life of Christian England dependent upon the resistance of Wessex, with its King and capital at Winchester; and when Alfred, the King of Wessex, succeeded in thrusting back the Danes and making them accept Catholicism, baptism, the Mass, and the whole of civilization, he made it certain for the future that England would be governed as one country from the South, with its centre at Winchester and later at London. There was only one moment when this unity was threatened, and that was a century and a half to two centuries later when the great earldoms tried to divide up the country, but were checked by the Norman Conquest.

The third point in Alfred's reign, the establishment of a national or official language, might have proved more important than it did. Hitherto in all documents of importance, and, indeed, in nearly all documents whatsoever, Latin had been the universal tongue; the little local dialects—Celtic in the west and north and mainly Teutonic in the south and east and centre—were not official. But with Alfred records were kept in the Anglo-Saxon of Winchester; Latin works were translated into that tongue, and it was used in public documents. It might have become the parent of a language which would have been used from that day to this all over the island, but the process was interrupted by the Norman Conquest, after which all the governing class and many others below them became French-speaking; so that a common national language did not arise in England till much later than it did in any other European

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country. This tongue, which we all now speak and which we call English, arose from the mixing of French and the old Anglo-Saxon speech; and the welding of the two was not complete until the generation before 1400, half a thousand years after Alfred's reign. Alfred's Anglo-Saxon is to-day a dead language.

**The Battle of Eddington.** The first seven years of Alfred's reign, from 871 to 878, were very perilous. It looked as though the heathen Danes, small as was their total number, were going to become the masters of the country. The anarchy which their repeated raids and burnings and massacres had produced all over England was leading to a rapid decline which might soon turn to a break-up. The Danes, under their Pagan leader called Guthrum, were masters of all the North. They put up a kinglet of their own in the Midlands over the district called Mercia, but he was their humble vassal; and soon after they began to extend their power towards the south. Had they succeeded all England would have gone.

They came southward by land with a force of perhaps 8000 to 10,000 men, and though their attacks from the sea upon the southern coasts were, as always, only raids and often defeated, their establishment by land got stronger and stronger. Many of the national leaders in the South—that is, the great landowners—fled overseas rather than stand the pressure, and took refuge in France. This was a most dangerous sign, because in those days everything depended upon the comparatively small body of rich men who held the land as nobles, and when they gave way the whole of society collapsed with them; for the mass of the people were serfs, not trained to fight and accepting whatever master war might give them. The worst year in this pressure was 877, when Alfred himself and his court held hardly any territory at all, and had to retire to fortified positions in the far marshes of Somerset.

In this half-flooded land there are one or two higher bits difficult to reach and suitable for defence; and in the district called Athelney, near Taunton, there are two in particular—the mount of Athelney itself and the isolated hillock called to this day King Alfred's Fort. From this refuge Alfred issued in the spring of 878, and on Whit Sunday summoned the lords and freemen—that is, the fighting men—of the three counties at the place where Somerset, Wiltshire, and Dorsetshire meet, a spot called Penselwood. Thence he marched directly for the place

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where the main Danish host was concentrated in the south, which was Chippenham. The two forces met in the neighbourhood of the village of Eddington, near Westbury. The actual battlefield was probably on the downs above. Alfred gained a complete victory and drove the Danish host and Guthrum into Chippenham, where they entrenched themselves; but after a fortnight's siege they surrendered, and the great mark of their surrender was that Alfred insisted upon Guthrum's being baptized and accepting the Catholic Faith. This was another way of saying that he compelled Guthrum and the leaders to accept civilization, so that in future they would be merged with the general life of England and no longer act as destroyers. This treaty, following on the battle of Eddington, was known as the Treaty of Wedmore, and was the turning-point in the story of the Danish invasions. They continue to be violent and destructive, but they are no longer mortal; for the Danes became more and more penetrated with our civilization. By the Treaty of Wedmore the Danes of the North and Midlands promised to remain on the far side of a line drawn east of London upon the river Lea and then along the Watling Street, the part beyond being called the Danelaw. In this part the Danes had their chief strongholds, in what were called the "Five Boroughs"—Lincoln, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, and Stamford.

**Feudalism.** At this point, the beginning of Alfred's recovery of England, we must note the state into which society had grown over all Western Europe. It was a condition which we now call feudalism, and that social condition ruled henceforward for hundreds of years. In the old time of the united Roman Empire, when there were no local kings, but only one central government in Rome, much the most of the land in the Christian West—that is, in the valley of the Rhine, England, France, Spain, and Italy—was held in large estates. Each corresponded more or less to a village territory. Each of these estates would belong to a lord, and was cultivated by his slaves. But, though there was a large class of lords who only had one village, many of them had several villages, and some of them had a very large number of villages scattered up and down the place. Those who held in their hands the lordships of a great many villages were naturally far richer and more important than the rest. They were the greater lords, or magnates.

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Very slowly, under the influence of the Catholic Faith, those who had been slaves in the Roman times—say, up to A.D. 400—began to turn into serfs. A serf differed from a slave in this—that though he still had to work for the profit of the lord of the village on the lord's land, he was allowed part of the land for himself and could hold it, and his children after him, for ever, so long as he performed his dues for the lord. These dues were fixed, and in this way each village produced a certain amount of wealth, much the greater part of which went to the serfs, but a certain regular part of the produce formed the lord's private income. As society got less secure in the Dark Ages lords with only one village would fall under the protection of a greater man who had several villages, and these again grouped themselves under the protection of the magnates who had a very large number of villages in many districts. The very largest of these magnates would be accepted as rulers of the whole place; the other great magnates accepted them as local rulers.

Over all these local rulers there grew up the kingship of some one man, usually richer than any of the others, and when this system was completed—which was round about Alfred's time—not only in England, but in France, in the Christian part of Germany, and in Northern Spain and Italy—in fact, all over Western Christendom—there was found, wherever you went, an arrangement of small lords under larger lords, and these under larger lords again.

Each man was said, not to own his land, but to 'hold' it of the greater man above him whom he had chosen as protector; and these great men in turn held it of the king above them all. As a mark of this organization sums of money were paid regularly from the inferior to the superior; they were very like what we call to-day death duties. When the lord of a village died and his son succeeded to the lordship he paid about one year's value of his property to the greater lord from whom he held, whether that greater lord were a local magnate or the ruler of a whole district or the king himself. In this way all society was bound together; with the serfs paying their dues to the local lords, and the local lords, on succession, paying dues to their superiors, and so on. Much the greater part of men in those days worked on the land, so that this 'feudal system' covered the great majority of Christian men in every district. But there were also towns which, though they had customs of their own, usually had some

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lord over them, taking dues from them, many of them being directly under the king.

A great deal of the land in England—about one-third—stood outside this feudal system, usually because it was for the most part not favourable for cultivation. Of such sort were the great woods, mountains, and wide heaths where no crop would grow, and such bits of good land as were scattered through these districts were not settled under a lord nor with a village community, but were counted as part of this outside system. These lands outside the feudal system were called by the general name of 'forests'; which word did not mean, as it means now, large woods, but any kind of land not under the feudal grouping. 'Forest' is derived, like 'foreigner,' from the Latin root for 'extraneous,' 'outside.' The forests were directly under the king; and such profits as were to be got from them and the rights of hunting in them went directly to the king; but nowhere did the forests belong to the feudal lords, everywhere they were regarded as the possession of the central government.

In this form of society the number of men available for fighting was no longer large, as it had been in the old Roman time. Only the lords and such freemen as they had in their train could be summoned to the host, and even these could only be summoned occasionally and for a short time. It was this small number of fighting men available for defence and this lack of organization which made the Danish invasions so serious.

### THE TENTH CENTURY: THE LULL (901-1000)

**The Effect of Alfred.** Though Alfred's name has taken an exaggerated place in the history of the country, it marks a definite step. He became King as a young man, not yet of age. He remained King over thirty years, and though his direct rule, even when there was no fighting with the pirates, only covered the southern part of the island, it was the period to which men afterwards looked back, because it marked the checking of the heathen onslaught. There would be further pirate raids, but they would come from Scandinavians who had at least begun to be civilized. It is noticeable that every one looked back to it as the restoration of Latin, which had fallen into a bad way through the looting and harrying of the land. It was also the moment when a certain court language began to be fixed, and

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when all sorts of old traditions and myths were gathered in what has since been called the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Because this end of the ninth century witnessed the revival of Latin, it witnessed a better ordering of religion, the uses of which, of course, depended upon the Latin tongue. Alfred even organized something of an armed force and of a navy, and we owe to him an institution which has been ill-understood, the Danish tribute or subsidy. This Danegeld, as people like to call it nowadays, was not a mere effort to buy off pirate attacks; it was rather an effort to incorporate and use as a fighting force the small number of pirates who had settled in England. They were but a few thousand, but they had, many of them, got hold of landed estates; they were wealthy out of proportion to their numbers. And they were all fighters, while the mass of the English population were below the fighting class, and some two-thirds of them were serfs. This policy of attempting to incorporate the raiders into the island society partly succeeded. It might have succeeded altogether but for the failure of a more violent policy, which attempted to terrorize the pirates a hundred years later.

**The Further Recovery.** Alfred died in 900 or 901. The century after his time—the tenth century—was, on its largest lines, a fairly peaceful transformation of the relations between the ancient Roman civilization of Britain and the bands of Scandinavians who looked for adventure and wealth by attacking it. This change took the form of England's becoming much more one realm than it had ever been before, and also of a gradual introduction of the Scandinavian to European civilization—that is, to the Mass, baptism, letters, and the general marks of our culture. And in this Christianizing and civilizing of Scandinavia (which was still only partly accomplished at the end of the hundred years) England played the largest part. English influence began to extend over Scandinavia as the Gallic armies had long before extended over the Germans the traditions of civilization and of Rome.

Alfred's son Edward, called the Elder, to distinguish him from later Edwards such as the Confessor, began tentatively to reoccupy the North, a task which his sister's husband had already undertaken before Alfred died. He reigned twenty-four years. His son Athelstan, who succeeded to him at thirty, marked another step. He was more really in power over England than anyone had been before him, and the island began to count

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somewhat in Europe. He married a sister to the French King, Charles the Simple. He began taking over North England, and he married another sister to the Scandinavian who was at the head of the little foreign garrisons there. That Scandinavian, Sightric, was still a heathen. Athelstan baptized him, and when he died shortly afterwards took over the direct management of his district. The dead man had a son called Anlaff, who, having thus lost his income, fled to Ireland to plan revenge. Meanwhile Athelstan affirmed his kingship, claimed a sort of overlordship over the whole island, and took on the Roman titles of Basileus and Imperator. At his court the heir to Norway was baptized. It was from his court also that Louis, the heir to the French crown, set forth to claim it. From his court another of his sisters married the German Emperor, Otto. Most important of all, he married a fourth sister to Hugh the Great, from whom descended the new kings of France. Anlaff came back in 937 (or 938) with a great mixed army of Danish pirates, English adventurers, and Scotsmen, some hired, some joining from hope of gain. It was the largest force that had come to England during all the troubles, probably 25,000 men. It was broken in a great battle the site of which no one knows, but which was famous for generations under the name of Brunanburgh. Two or three years after this confirmation of his power Athelstan died. It is a memorable date, October 27, 940. Thenceforward England has unity, and is in some vague way a nation.

**The Normans.** While these things were proceeding to the north of the Channel in the first half of the tenth century, two things of importance were affecting civilization to the south of the Channel, on the continent of Europe. The first was the formation of the Norman Duchy. The second was the religious reform starting from the monastery of Cluny, in Burgundy.

The first of these things, the rise of the Normans, was the creation of a sort of new state on the northern shores of Gaul, or, as the country had now come to be called, Francia, which in time has become France. The same Scandinavian pirates who had raided England had, of course, raided the Continent as well. They came in the same comparatively small bands; they came with the same motive, loot; they came under the same Pagan mood—hardly organized enough to be called a religion; and they tended south of the Channel, as they did north of it, to

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be affected by, and at last to join, the higher civilization they were raiding. Some of them married into the landowning families; others seized 'wasted' lands; so that there was some small proportion of their blood, most of it in the wealthier part of society, established along the lower Seine.

The leader of one of their original bands, Rollo, had been taken in as an ally of the Emperor's civilized government, and given rule over the district, as a subordinate to the Christian Empire. Thus arose what was called the Duchy of Normandy, which extended over an old Roman division, the Second Lyonesse. Whether by some slight accident of blood or through the exceptional talents of the ruling family, Normandy became a successful state, well organized under ambitious leaders, its hereditary Dukes. They were like other Frenchmen of the time, in stature, speech, and all social customs; they were short men, broad-shouldered, talking Northern French (there is no such thing as 'Norman' French—the phrase is an ignorant academic figment), and indistinguishable from the men of Picardy, or the men of the new kingship of Paris, save for the new character of their rulers and court.

By the end of the century, before the year 1000, the thing was firmly established, and the Normans under their Duke had become a singularly definite power.

**Cluny.** Of more importance than the Normans, and of lasting effect, was the reforming spirit, the spirit of spiritual recovery, which spread at much the same time from the monastery of Cluny, in Burgundy. As in the case of the Norman influence, we cannot say what the factors were which combined to start this considerable affair. Cluny undertook to spread an enthusiasm for the recovery of the Church from the decline into which it had fallen at the end of the Dark Ages. The seizure of Church property for lay purposes, the slackening of discipline within the clerical body, all the stagnation and corruption which had come upon society increasingly since the death of Charlemagne, were the object of Cluny's attack. They set out to restore the old ideal of celibacy for the clergy, the independence of the Church from lay government, and the claim of her bishops, priests, and other officials to form an independent, sacred body whose mission it was to preserve the soul of Christendom. This spirit, which was spreading like a fire overseas, appeared in England through the great personality of St Dunstan.

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**St Dunstan.** St Dunstan dominates all the active part of the tenth century in England. He was made Abbot of Glastonbury, the monastery where he had studied as a boy. He was probably given the post very early, when not yet twenty-one, his patron being Athelstan's half-brother, Edmund, who had succeeded him, and who was a young man, like St Dunstan himself. He was the leading man in England until, as Archbishop of Canterbury, he died in 988. Through a very long life, therefore, from quite early youth to close on his seventieth year, it was he more than any other who governed, while the kings of what was now admittedly one country lived in the midst of faction, died, or were murdered young.

Dunstan was Archbishop of Canterbury for no less than twenty-eight years, all the later part of his life; and in that position he showed intense creative energy in the making of a new time. Bishopric by bishopric, he imposed the new reformed ideal upon the clergy, insisting upon the old counsel, which was now a command, of celibacy, replacing where he could the slackened secular clergy by regulars in the cathedral chapters, and perpetually relying upon the central authority at Rome.

It is interesting to note that St Dunstan was a forerunner. Though England was now at last something of a state, and had some place in Christendom, it was of no great weight, and one would have expected influence to come again from the south of Europe rather than that England should be a pioneer in the spirit that was stirring throughout Europe. Yet so it was. The great change in the Papacy, the triumphant and conscious battle for the restoration of the Church in its full liberties and strength, which will always be associated with the name of St Gregory VII (Hildebrand) came a lifetime later. St Dunstan's effort was local, and in part failed; but we must always remember that the revival of the Catholic Church, which was one of the marks of the ending of the Dark Ages, was thus launched in England, and by an Englishman.

**Ethelred.** Ten years before St Dunstan died a child of ten, whose elder half-brother had been murdered, was crowned King of England at Kingston. He was the grandson of Athelstan's brother, and the right heir; but his own mother had caused the murder of her stepson, the last boy-King. As Ethelred grew up through his teens there was a renewal, in not very grave form, of Scandinavian raids. But when the lad was

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already well over twenty, in 991, there was a serious effort of a new kind, coming from overseas, to make profit out of the disorganized society of England.

The second chapter of the Danish invasions, as they are called, had begun. They differed from the first welter and chaos of the early raids (which Alfred had stemmed) in these two things: that there came to be a dynastic aim—that is, a desire to establish a Scandinavian kingdom in England, and that these new kings, as they desired to make themselves, were already becoming Christian, and Norway and Denmark with them. They were as yet very imperfectly civilized, but, having accepted baptism, they could be received as equals and as something ‘possible,’ while the old pirates had been a mere disaster, and regarded as wild beasts and enemies of mankind.

Olaf of Norway, a Christian king, came with a great fleet this year, 991, into the Suffolk waterways, and sacked Ipswich. The governor of Essex was sent against him, met him at Maldon, on the estuary of the Blackwater, and was defeated in a great Scandinavian victory. The invaders were paid money to withdraw, but the new perils for the disunited society of England had begun, and were to last a long lifetime.

**The Massacre of St Brice’s Day.** The position was this. There were, among the richer people, many men and a few women of Scandinavian blood firmly settled in England. They were nothing in numbers, compared to the millions of the population, but they were rivals to the local magnates and to the English King himself. They could always, unless they were given posts and favours, appeal to their kinsmen beyond the North Sea, and the society of England had become so distracted with rivalries and treasons that the Scandinavian intrusion was felt as a menace by the small, rich governing class and by what was now the established English monarchy. The English monarchy of that day was a monarchy loosely held, with magnates under it half independent, on the parallel of what was going on all over Christendom as feudalism developed. Still, it had the title and position of English kingship, and, a lure to each invader, a royal revenue and a hoard, or treasury.

After the battle of Maldon—that is, at the approach of the year 1000—two policies lay for choice before the King and his native lords. Either they must try to absorb, and amalgamate with, the Scandinavian menace, or they must lean towards the

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high civilization beyond the Channel in Gaul, and trust that influence from there would protect them against further Scandinavian encroachment.

The first policy had been tried and apparently had failed. In spite of it, and although the Scandinavians were already half-Christian, and Olaf, their King, baptized, they had come back, to the diminution of English revenues and the increase of their own. They had seized posts with large incomes and power, and were the rivals of the richer English and their King. Therefore Ethelred and his native rich men decided for leaning towards French aid and alliance. That alliance would not be active. It would only mean connection by marriage, and some moral support. To secure his position Ethelred would also have to strike terror.

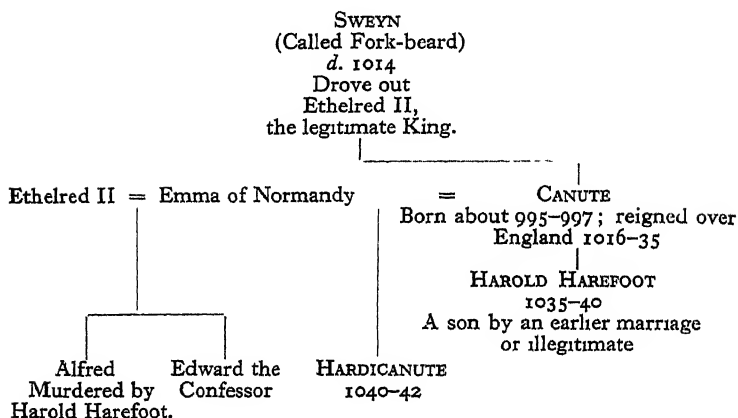
Ethelred began by marrying Emma, the sister of the Duke of Normandy. This was in the year 1002. It was a second marriage, his first wife having died. Next he proceeded to a secret organization against the Danish magnates, and to a sudden massacre of them on St Brice's Day (November 13) in the same year.

**Sweyn.** The massacre of St Brice's Day was not unprovoked. Eight years before, three years after Maldon, Olaf of Norway had come again, bringing with him King Sweyn of Denmark, and they had tried to loot London. In this they failed, but they took ransom before they sailed away. Now, in this massacre on St Brice's Day there had fallen Brunhilda, the sister of King Sweyn; she was married to an English Dane, and it was as a piece of personal revenge, as well as for personal gain and hope of more revenue, that Sweyn came down in great force the next year, pushing through South England, robbing and killing. The thing went on for four years. It was not until the year 1007 that he sailed away again, gorged with loot.

Ethelred did the best he could in a realm now quite uncertain and shaken, and where almost any great man was ready to betray, whether on the Danish or the English side. He bears the false modern nickname in history of 'the Unready,' due to a mistranslation. What he was called in his own time was not 'the Unready,' but 'the Ill-counselled.' He built a great fleet to preserve the country from further attack. A magnate of the name of Wulnoth, who seems to have had some kind of hereditary

# A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND

## THE SCANDINAVIAN USURPERS



power in Sussex, deserted with part of the fleet, and began to ravage the coasts. This was in the year 1009.

Sweyn on taking payment two years before had promised not to attack again. But he sent another Dane called Thurcyll, who began again the looting and the ravaging and the murdering, sacking and burning Canterbury and butchering the Archbishop. In 1012 Ethelred bought up Thurcyll, and Sweyn, taking this alliance between his envoy and his enemy as a cause for war, sailed again for England in 1013 with the finest fleet that had yet been seen, and with some very large force of armed men. He had with him his young, energetic, dwarfish son, called Canute, then about eighteen years old. He won the disintegrated society of England with far too much ease; and though London stood out against him, defended very well by Thurcyll and Ethelred, all the rest submitted, and at Bath Sweyn was proclaimed King of England, supported by all the nobles of the North and the Midlands and of Wessex.

This was in the height of the summer of 1013. The dynastic battle had been won, and a Scandinavian had seized the throne of the country. Ethelred fled from London to France, and to his brother-in-law in Normandy, in the first days of the new year, 1014, and at the very beginning of the next month Sweyn died.

## THE DARK AGES IN ENGLAND

### THE ELEVENTH CENTURY: THE LAST OF THE DARK AGES (1002-66)

**The Coming of Canute.** The coming of Canute, nearly twenty-two years of him, of which nineteen were those of his unchallenged power, is for England the last of the Dark Ages, and the dawn of the Middle Ages.

I have said that the year 1000 forms the rough landmark for the division between the two periods. England commonly lags behind the continent of Europe in these general movements (though the episode of St Dunstan was an exception to this), and in Canute's time the country lagged behind the general movement of Christendom. Beyond the Channel everything was awakening, the vigorous Norman state was fully formed, the new French monarchy—which was to be the type and model of the reawakened monarchy all over the West, and the central organ thereof—was well in the saddle. The "Great Curiosity" was awakening, with the first sceptical question on religion, which was soon to become the great debate on the Real Presence in the Sacrament, with which Northern France was filled. The advance against the Mohammedan in Spain had begun, and within half a lifetime the first decisive victory was to be won in the re-establishment of Christendom south of the Pyrenees. The reform of organization and practice in the Church was on the way, notably the better discipline of the clergy and the strengthening of the central power of Rome. All these things were beginning to move with vigour in the generation following the year 1000. But in England things had been put back by the perpetual harrying of the pirate invasions.

None the less, Canute's period is the beginning of new things here. This is not due to Canute's own character, for he was still something of a barbarian, though of greater intelligence than the rest, having a Polish mother. It was simply the spirit of the time at work. But Canute by his vigour did keep things together and afforded English society a breathing-space for twenty years.

**The First Three Years.** The armed men and the fleet acclaimed Canute as King of England immediately on his father's death. He was then nineteen, almost a dwarf in stature, as we have seen, very energetic, but through his Polish mother

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something different: livelier and keener than the tall Scandinavians with their soft flesh and clumsy bludgeoning by way of government. It was to the advantage of himself and the work he had to do that the young man was strongly attracted by civilization. He did not hark back to barbarism. He was devoted to Rome, and was fully in the tide of the new religious movement, which was so greatly to strengthen the Holy See.

The first event of his reign was the return of Ethelred. The magnates attempted to use his misfortunes. They bargained with him, proposing to limit his power. But he relied on London, and, marching north, defeated Canute at Gainsborough; and Canute sailed away to Denmark. Ethelred had by his first marriage a son who was old enough to take part in the fighting, Edmund by name. His other sons, the children of Emma of Normandy, were, of course, too young. Edmund had the nickname of *Ferrium Latus*, which means 'a Side of Iron,' of which later times have made the title 'Ironsides.' His sister had married Eadric, one of the great local governors, controlling the Midlands (Mercia). There also associated with him that Thurcyll, the Dane whom Ethelred had called in to be an ally and to be at the head of his fleet.

These three began by acting together against the Danes in England; but as each played for revenue at the expense of the others there was a perfect welter. Eadric murdered the two governors of Northern England. Edmund married the widow of one of them. Canute came back, and Eadric deserted his brother-in-law to help Canute. The South of England—that is, Wessex—or rather the magnates thereof, accepted Canute again to be the King, while Edmund stood out in the West. Then Eadric betrayed Canute in his turn and went back to his brother-in-law. Thurcyll had joined Canute. Edmund beat them in Kent, but their ships were in the mouth of the Thames and brought their forces over to the north bank, so, when Edmund had gone all the way round by London Bridge to meet them, he was beaten at the battle of Assandun, in Essex. This chaos ended in a division of the government between Canute and Edmund, as Ethelred was dead, and the problem of division was settled by Edmund's own death in November 1016.

**Canute in Power.** Canute was now (1016) in his twenty-second year. He began to show mature qualities. He put

## THE DARK AGES IN ENGLAND

Edric to death—a very wise act, for Edric would always be intriguing and betraying. He sent Edmund Ironside's two little sons out of England, to be ultimately brought up by St Stephen, the new Christian King of Hungary. He allowed the two young sons of Emma, the second family of Ethelred, to go over to Normandy and be brought up by their relatives there. He recognized the great local divisions of England—the North, the Midlands, and the South—and put a sort of sub-king, or great governor, over each, with the Scandinavian title of Earl. It is a title which, though having changed to mean very different things, has gone on for nine hundred years.

But the two most important things he did were (1) the marrying of Emma (Ethelred had died in 1016), and (2) the taking as a favourite of a young man like himself, Godwin.

The first of these actions diluted, as it were, the growing influence of France, which had been the chief menace to the barbarian Danish efforts at governing England. He became by this marriage the brother-in-law of the reigning Duke of Normandy, in his long-established Norman court.

**Godwin.** Canute's taking of Godwin for a favourite was to prove of great importance for the future. It very nearly established a new dynasty over England. Godwin was the son of that Wulnoth, of the house of Sussex, whom we saw betraying Ethelred. Canute took him over to Denmark with him, when he went over there in 1019 to establish his claims, and married him into his own family, giving him for wife his brother-in-law's sister.

Godwin was a man of very forcible character, unscrupulously wicked and commanding the devotion of those who followed him. So long as Canute lived his own force of character was too strong for Godwin to rebel against it. But he had nearly all he wanted already. He counted, through his marriage, as a Dane, his children had Danish names, and Canute, when he became general lord not only of England, but of Norway and Denmark and part of Sweden, made of Godwin a sort of sub-king, giving him the Earldom of Wessex, which was all the South of England and much the most populous and wealthiest part of the island.

At the height of his power Canute made a famous pilgrimage to Rome, and died a few years afterwards at Shaftesbury, in 1035, only forty years old.

## A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND

**Godwin's Further Rise.** During seven years, from 1035 to 1042, there was, as might be expected in the conditions of that day, the disorder which always broke out when a controlling hand failed. Canute had had a boy by Emma, Hardicanute by name, and had also had an older son by a former wife, Harold by name—a fast runner whom (to distinguish him from all the other Harolds) men called Harefoot. This Harold Harefoot was acclaimed King on Canute's death. He was debauched and worthless, and the real power was in the hands of Godwin and Emma. Of Emma's two sons, Edward and Alfred, by her first marriage with Ethelred, each tried his chance at the English throne. Edward went back when he found that his mother would not support him. Alfred in the year after Canute's death tried again. Godwin met him at Canterbury, took him to Guildford, there had him betrayed to Harefoot, who treated him with such abominable cruelty that he died, or was murdered. Then Emma, who had perhaps taken part in the crime, quarrelled with her fellow-criminal Godwin, and fled to the court of the Count of Flanders.

**The Count of Flanders.** The Count of Flanders was one of those great local rulers, like the Duke of Normandy, who, though nominally vassal to the King of France, was in power almost equal to him. He governed what is now north-eastern France and the Flemish-speaking people up to the mouth of the Scheldt; and he had under him the great commercial cities of the Netherlands, which were beginning to be important. He and his son are the central points of the political development which fills the next twenty-five years. His name, like that of his son, was Baldwin.

**The Coming of Edward the Confessor.** In the year 1040 Harold Harefoot died, and Godwin made his gentle young half-brother, Hardicanute, King. But Hardicanute himself died in 1042, and Godwin thought it would best suit his projects for power to summon Emma's surviving son by Ethelred, Edward, to the throne. He was the next in the true succession of the old national line, unless we count the two boys of Edmund Ironside, who were hundreds of miles away. His reign would be popular, and he was known to be of a gentle spirit, which Godwin thought—and unfortunately thought rightly—he could control. So Edward, who was probably already in England, was crowned King in 1042. He was then approaching forty years of age.

## THE DARK AGES IN ENGLAND

**Character of Edward the Confessor.** This new King, who was canonized later on as St Edward and is known in history as Edward the Confessor, was a man it is easy for posterity to misunderstand, and especially for modern men to underestimate. He was not good at asserting himself. He did not care enough about worldly things for a king. He was tall, and not weak in body, though lacking in energy. He loved hunting. As for his presence, it was a mixture. He seems to have been almost an albino in complexion, with pink face and whitish hair; but he had a royal manner about him which impressed people. His chief characteristic was that quality which can never be hidden, *holiness*. It impressed his time profoundly, and caused him to be worshipped by the masses of the people. Under such a character it was clear that Godwin's influence would increase, as Godwin himself had calculated. He married the King to his daughter Edith. He and his sons governed the great mass of English wealth and population as Earls; and, as was always the case with the Danish efforts against England (we must remember that Godwin by his marriage and associations counted as a Dane), he stood in fear of the increasing influence of the rapidly growing French culture, represented by the power of Normandy.

Edward himself was, of course, French-speaking. So was his mother, the old lady, Emma, and he had many Normans about him. He had made Robert of Jumièges, his chaplain, into one of the greater bishops, and later Archbishop of Canterbury. All his surroundings were of that sort, and it is probable that the court as a whole was French-speaking. Godwin might not have been so, but Godwin's sons, Sweyn and Harold and Tostig, were probably bilingual; still more probably their sister Edith, the Queen.

**William of Falaise.** The great figure of Edward the Confessor's early reign was William, the young Duke of Normandy, his cousin. William was the great-nephew of Edward's mother, Emma. He was the grandson, though illegitimate, of Emma's brother, the former Duke of Normandy; and William's father had made him Duke by getting the magnates to swear to him when he was a little boy of seven.

In the first year of Edward's reign William was a short, broad, vigorous young man, just of age. He had won his battle against rebels at home; he had a very large revenue, a

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good intelligence, and united great tenacity of purpose to physical courage. He was in the very heart of the Northern French rulers. His aunt by marriage, Adela, the daughter of the King of France, had married Baldwin of Flanders. William himself aspired to marry, and later did marry, the daughter of Baldwin of Flanders, and it was the house of Flanders that, by supporting William, led to his final success.

William came over in great pomp to see his cousin Edward, and it was probably then that Edward made some promise to him about the succession.

**The Rebellion and Re-establishment of Godwin.** In the year 1051 Godwin, trying his power against the King, refused to obey an order in a test matter concerning the French-speaking relatives and friends of the King. He began an armed rebellion, but the other Earls supported the King. Godwin fled overseas, and his sons, notably Harold, took to piracy for a time, and ravaged the English coasts. Godwin soon came back and reasserted himself, in 1052, and thenceforward he, and his son Harold after him, was the strongest in the kingdom. They had put the Papacy against them by defending an intriguing cleric of the name of Stigand; for when Godwin had proved successful against the French group Robert of Jumièges, the Archbishop of Canterbury, fled, and Godwin and his sons imposed Stigand upon the Primate's throne, and got him confirmed as Archbishop by an Anti-Pope. It was the moment of the new and rising Papacy, when the great Leo IX was carrying on the reform of the Church, and struggling with the Emperor. Thenceforward the whole increasing weight of the newly invigorated Papacy was opposed to Godwin and his sons.

**The Succession.** Who should succeed Edward the Confessor? It was certain he would have no sons of his own. He was believed to have made some conditional promise to his cousin William of Falaise, Duke of Normandy, as we saw; but anyhow he now recalled the nearest heir in the line of the old native kings, his cousin, another Edward, the son of Edmund Ironside, who had been in exile all these years in Hungary. But that cousin, shortly after landing in England, died—poisoned, it was thought, by Harold, for there was already an intention of raising Godwin's house to the throne by usurpation.

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This Edward who had died left, indeed, a child, Edgar, known as Edgar the Atheling, but he was so young in that year (1057) that no one considered him.

Godwin himself had long been dead (since 1053), and Harold, much the wealthiest and most powerful of the magnates, ruling all the South of England (Wessex), hoped to make himself King. It is possible that Edward, who seems to have made that other conditional promise to William, gave some conditional promise to Harold, his brother-in-law. By that time Harold and William of Falaise were the obvious two rivals for the throne of England—neither of them heirs by blood, but one (William) connected with the royal line by his great-aunt Emma's marriage, and the other by his sister Edith's marriage. It must be remembered that such of the English people as cared about government (most of them were serfs and indifferent) had been so used to foreign conquest and dynasties that they were prepared for anything in this year 1065.

Then it was that everything was changed by an event of capital importance.

**Harold's Oath.** Harold, sailing to Normandy (in order to convey Edward's promise of the succession to William, according to some; according to others, cruising about the sea with no object, which is unlikely), was caught in a westerly storm and wrecked at the mouth of the Maye, in the estuary of the Somme. The local lord, who had right of wreckage, held him for ransom. William, Duke of Normandy, paid his captor and brought Harold as a friend, and almost as an equal, with great pomp and ceremony to his court. There he associated with the Duke of Normandy and his mighty men, fought side by side with them in an expedition into Brittany, *and took an oath that he would help the Duke to the English throne.* He also did homage for his lands to William as the heir-apparent of England, accepted great presents, and sailed home again. A few months later, at the end of 1065, on Christmas Eve, St Edward was taken ill. He had just time to consecrate his new great church, the Abbey of Westminster, when he died, on the Eve of Epiphany, January 5, 1066.

**Harold's Usurpation.** Harold was determined to seize the throne, in spite of his oath; but it was not easy to do so. The Church was against him; his swearing of allegiance to William was the most solemn act which, in that epoch, could

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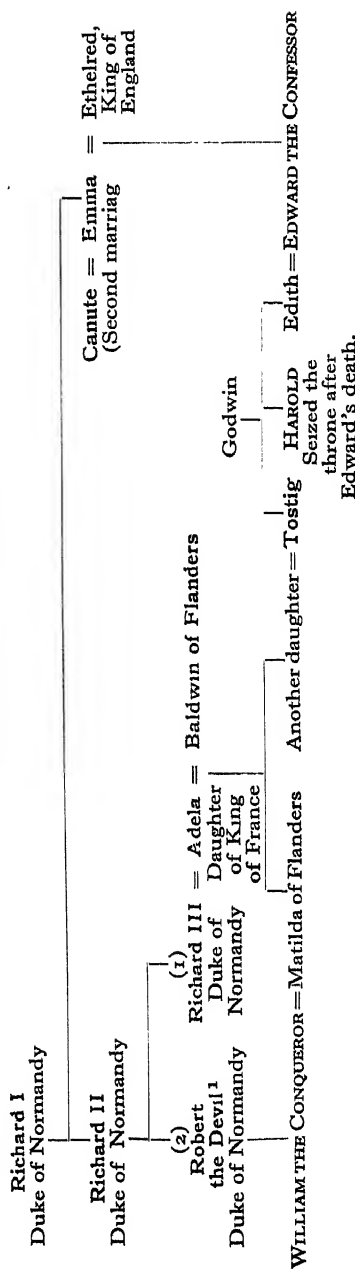
be conceived. He did not even summon the full regular council, nor wait for general support. He had his brother-in-law, Edward the Confessor, buried at dawn of Epiphany Day, immediately after his death, and *himself crowned at High Mass on the same morning*; and got his claim acknowledged by such magnates as were in London at the time. He could and did plead that he had given the oath when he was virtually a prisoner, that kings of England in times past had sometimes been chosen by the council of magnates, and not by the designation of the last king. Even so, Edward on his deathbed had pointed to Harold and told him naturally enough, as he was the government of the day, that he looked to him for the management of the kingdom. But William, appealing to what was the almost unanimous opinion of Christendom, determined to make good his claim. It was the easier for him to do so because, as usual, the magnates in England were quarrelling among themselves.

Harold's brother Tostig had married the daughter of the late Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and the sister of the present one. He was thus brother-in-law to William. He had been turned out of his government in the North of England, and was determined to recover it. So, while William of Normandy was preparing the largest fleet that had yet been seen in Europe, for the purpose of invading England with 50,000 men, Tostig, having allied himself with the King of Norway, Harold Hardrada, set out to attack his brother Harold from the East Coast.

**The Battle of Hastings.** Tostig and the King of Norway got to the mouth of the Humber in the middle of September. On the 20th they defeated the local government of Morcar, and seized York. Harold then did some of the most astonishing marching that has been done in all the story of soldiering. Of course, much of his forces were local levies who had not to go the whole way, but he himself went the whole way, and many of his own household troops must have gone the whole way with him.

Four days after Tostig had captured York Harold was beginning his concentration in that county. Three days after that, on September 27, he destroyed the army of Tostig and Harold Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, near York. On the next day, September 28, 1066, William sailed from the mouth

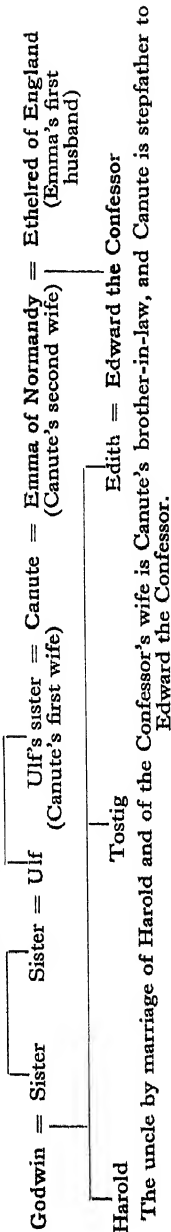
# CLOT OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MAGNATES AT THE CONQUEST



Thus :

Adela, daughter of the King of France, was aunt by marriage *and* mother-in-law of William the Conqueror. She was also the mother-in-law of Tostig, Harold's brother.  
Harold was brother-in-law to Edward the Confessor and the brother of William the Conqueror's brother-in-law, Tostig.  
Emma of Normandy was great-aunt to William the Conqueror, mother of Edward the Confessor, mother-in-law of Harold's sister, and widow of Canute.  
William himself was the son of Edward the Confessor's first cousin and brother-in-law to the brother of Edward the Confessor's wife Edith.

Note also the connection of the Godwin family with Canute and Emma.



<sup>1</sup> Robert the Devil was the younger son of Richard II.

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of the Somme with his great host, and landed in Pevensey harbour (as it then was: it is now dry land) mid-morning of the next day, Michaelmas, September 29, on the flood-tide. He raided all the country round for provisions, and concentrated round Hastings.

It cannot have taken less than three days for the news of William's invasion to reach Harold. York is nearly two hundred miles from London. But Harold was in London with troops in little, if anything, over a week. He marched out again by the south-eastern Roman road to Rochester, then by the Roman road from Rochester to Hastings, reaching what was evidently a studied defensive position, which that road cuts, six miles from Hastings, where now stand the village and the ruins of the Abbey of Battle. We do not know what name, if any, it bore at the time; whatever it was, it was not Senlac, which is not an English name at all. Harold, with the host and all the baggage, was on this ridge by the evening of October 13.

On the next day, Saturday, October 14, William, with his 50,000 men, marched out from Hastings northward, six miles up the road, and deployed on the opposing slope, called Telham Hill. Battle was joined at about nine o'clock or just after, and took the form of repeated assaults all day long against Harold's line, running from one end of the ridge to the other, not far short of a mile. Harold, being on the defensive, had left his horses behind the line, and put all his men on foot. The invaders, who came from all parts of Northern France, and some few of them from farther south, and even from Italy, had for their central and strongest portion a body of Norman knights, mounted. The mounted forces in all were perhaps 14,000, with more than double that number of allies and mercenaries, mainly on foot.

Till the last moment in a struggle of over eight hours the thing hung doubtful. The line on the ridge, though men often left it to deliver counter-charges, remained unbroken. Either of the two opponents might have collapsed from fatigue first. As fortune would have it, the collapse came on the defenders, just at dusk. Harold himself was killed, the line broke, and, in spite of an attempted rally in the first darkness, all was decided before night.

From that moment the England we know began to arise.

### III

## THE CONQUEST

### WILLIAM I (SURNAMED THE CONQUEROR)

**Nature of the Middle Ages.** The Middle Ages were the settlement and restoration of Europe after the Dark Ages. Christendom, being now free from the danger of destruction from outside, recovered, began to develop new institutions, and to revive or newly invigorate old ones such as guilds and town constitutions.

It was a period of high activity, political and artistic, and of intense thought, and philosophy in the summit of the Middle Ages reached its highest level; many, therefore, regard its central century, the thirteenth (1201-1300), as the greatest in history. Unlike the Dark Ages, which could not be constructive because all their energies were occupied in preserving what they had, the Middle Ages have left us memorials on all sides—their great castles, their great cathedrals, the walls of their towns, their literature, etc. It was in the Middle Ages that the nations which now make up Europe began to develop as separate things in the unity of Christendom; the universities also arose then, the assemblies called Parliaments, and the popular languages which ultimately settled into what we now call French, English, Spanish, Italian, etc., though Latin was all the time the main language of all public transactions and documents, of law, all kinds of learning and teaching, and, of course, of the services of the Church in the West. English was the last vernacular language to appear, because it could not be formed until the upper classes had ceased to be French-speaking. The various German and Slav dialects arose long before the Middle Ages; their roots extend beyond the beginning of history. In the East of Christendom Greek took the place of Latin for religious liturgy and for letters; but the East of Christendom, having its capital at Constantinople, had been partly cut off by the moving downward of barbarians into the Balkans, and its former territories in Egypt, Syria, and

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Asia Minor were mainly occupied or governed by the Mohammedans, so that it counted less and less in Christendom, while the West, with its centre at Rome, counted more and more. This recovery of Europe which we call the Middle Ages began with a number of new energies; from shortly after the year 1000 the new spirit is awake; the Mohammedan begins to be pushed back in Spain; the German Christians, including the newly converted barbaric part of them, are secure against Pagan pressure from the east, Hungary is converted and comes into line as a Christian power, Poland appears as another Christian power, vigorous adventurers from Normandy spread the French tongue and the Latin Mass in South Italy and Sicily and press back the Mohammedan influence there also; but the greatest movement is that for invigorating religion. This, as we have seen, was called the Cluniac Movement, from the monastery of Cluny, in Burgundy, which had the chief influence in the reform. The principal figure herein is the Italian monk Hildebrand, who later became Pope under the title of Gregory VII. His effort, and that of those whom he inspired, was to restore the complete independence of the Church as a self-governing body throughout Christendom; he reformed the elections to the Papacy so that the supreme office should not be filled by the influence of kings and emperors, but by the regular vote of the ecclesiastical body—the origin of what we call to-day the College of Cardinals.

All this new influence, a sort of resurrection of Europe, covers the eleventh century (1001–1100). It came somewhat late to England, being established by the Norman Conquest, though it had been filtering in for some little time before. The English Middle Ages proper, however, do not begin until 1066. The Middle Ages as a whole run from this period of the eleventh century to the beginning of the sixteenth century—that is, to a little after 1500. But they are sharply divided into an earlier and greater part which may be called the true, or High, Middle Ages and a later one, the decline of the medieval spirit. The division between the two is the great pestilence of the Black Death in 1348, which changed everything.

**The Conquest. The Effort at Peaceful Organization.** After the battle of Hastings William garrisoned Dover, the main port of entry from the Continent, and marched round London by the south, going up the Thames to Wallingford,

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crossing there, and carrying on after till he came to Berkhamstead. There the council, which had attempted for a moment to set up Edgar the Atheling as King, surrendered to William, and he was crowned in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day. He intended to organize his new power peacefully, but what prevented this was the nature of his army. It was as yet wholly composed of people foreign to England; it was only loosely organized under feudal chiefs; and though much of it was paid regularly, it expected to be allowed to loot. It was probably the desire to loot which made the soldiers outside Westminster Abbey during William's coronation break loose and pillage and burn in Westminster, under the pretext that their leader, William, was in danger. Wherever the forces of William penetrated this rising antagonism between them and the population appeared, and it was impossible for William to suppress the disorder of his own followers, because he had no strict military discipline such as we have to-day and as the Romans had of old, but only the feudal groups, often quite small, each under its own lord.

There was a considerable transfer of lordships over the land, but it chiefly affected the greater posts; the lesser lords of single villages or manors seem most of them to have been left alone, though heavily taxed to redeem their position under the new reign. The families of all those who had fought with Harold were, of course, technically rebels, who might be dispossessed and would have to redeem their land at a high price, but most of them remained in place. The changes were in the highest feudal posts; the chief followers of William were made overlords throughout the country. The most important of them was his half-brother Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux, who had the governorship of Kent.

**William's Error in returning to Normandy.** As there had been no widespread trouble at first the King returned to Normandy in the March of the next year, 1067, in order to enjoy a sort of triumph, taking with him in his train certain of the greater English nobles, including Edgar. This absence of his in Normandy was ill-timed; he left Odo to act for him in England, and he and others of the chief Normans mishandled the situation. The troubles were as yet local, but were getting serious by the time William returned, though he had only been absent a few months.

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**The Use of Force.** The first serious rising, which seems to have been connected with William's exceptional taxation, or with new regulations interfering with old usage, was in the West, at Exeter. It was easily settled, for William had by this time native troops to help him: but more trouble followed. The governors of the North, who had held their position before Hastings, were uncertain, and one of them—Edwin—rebelled. The town of York rose; Edgar the Atheling got away, and was received in Scotland by King Malcolm; and all that year, 1068, was full of such movements. William got the better of them for the moment without great severity, but in the next year things became serious. The garrison in Durham was massacred, much of the North rose, Edgar joined in from Scotland, later on the sons of Harold began to harry the West, and, what was most dangerous of all, the Danes again appeared to threaten invasion. The trouble in England seemed to offer them an opportunity.

If this last Danish invasion had succeeded all the work of the new Norman organization would have been undone. But the energy of William was equal to the occasion. He suppressed risings on all sides, setting up garrisons in the Midlands and the West. He came to York. The Danes dared not meet him and retired, and he kept his Christmas of 1069 with great solemnity in York, and then marched north (in the teeth of the winter), ravaging a wide belt of country right up as far as the Tyne. Terrible memories of that ravaging survived; it was the chief act of violence connected with the Conquest. Its main effect upon history, however, was not the mere suppression of a local rebellion, but the ending once and for all of the old danger of invasion from the North Sea. After this year (1070) the peril of barbarians from the east, which had harassed England intermittently for six hundred years, was heard of no more. William ended the campaign by throwing a strong garrison into Chester after a remarkable march in very bad weather through the Pennines. Nothing remained but an isolated centre of resistance in the marshlands, where Hereward (called the Wake), with one of the rebellious northern governors, and a group of others stood a siege which dragged on for many months, though it could only have one end. After the breakdown of that centre of resistance William's power was secure.

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**The Scottish Allegiance.** A very important thing followed, in 1072, this success of William. It was the oath of allegiance which the King of Scotland, Malcolm, swore to William as his feudal chief. Ever since the Roman invasion, more than a thousand years before, the idea of a united Britain under one chief government had existed. For centuries, however, it was nearly forgotten, and never came into practice at all. But now for the first time there was a definite bond. It was only a feudal link, leaving the King of Scotland exactly what he had been before, but there had been an admission that the King of England was suzerain, and this admission was never forgotten. Nor was William's own presence in Scotland, where he marched as far as Abernethy.

**The Ecclesiastical Settlement.** The Norman Conquest brought England into line with all the rest of Christendom, and merged English life in that of Western civilization more thoroughly than it had been since the Danish invasions had begun. But in this work the most important part was not the stricter enforcement of laws, nor even the new settlement of land, but the ecclesiastical arrangements of the Conqueror. His expedition had been directly encouraged by the Papacy, an important element in the struggle had been the schismatic character of Harold and his Archbishop, Stigand; and William was bent not only upon the reorganization of the chief ecclesiastical offices, but also upon their international character, and particularly upon using them for the confirmation of his own rule. Before he died the bishoprics were filled one by one with Normans, just as the great overlordships had been; and he further reorganized the working of ecclesiastical courts. Before the new movement in the Church ecclesiastical cases concerning morals and wills and the internal government of the Church, and dealing with disputes between clerics and laymen, or injury done by clerics, were dealt with by the ecclesiastical authorities, indeed, but in the same local assemblies as those which administered civil justice. There were two jurisdictions, separate in function but not separate in place. William regularized this in England, as it had been recently regularized in Normandy, setting the ecclesiastical courts apart from the civil courts. He further deposed Stigand, and put in his place one of the greatest men in the Christendom of that day, Lanfranc of Pavia.

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**Lanfranc.** Lanfranc had long been the chief man in Normandy. He was an Italian, a Lombard from Pavia who had come north, becoming a monk in the Abbey of Bec, which he raised to great fame through his work as a teacher. His chief work had been the defence of the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament as against the first great movement of heresy denying that doctrine which had been led by Berengarius of Tours. It was Lanfranc's vigorous and successful efforts in defence of the ancient truth which had chiefly made him famous. But he was further remarkable for great powers of administration, for the clarity and exactitude of his judgment and for his firmness. He was also at this time a venerable figure, twenty years older than William himself, and in every way suited to be the head of the Church in England under the new reign. He rebuilt the cathedral at Canterbury, and it is interesting to remember that he first in that cathedral church used at Mass the gesture which later developed into the Elevation of the Host.

**The Domesday Survey.** Two main acts of William in connection with the land mark the end of his reign; and each was to have a long-enduring effect. First, he summoned a great meeting of landholders on Salisbury Plain and demanded from them a direct personal oath to himself, as something separate from and superior to the feudal obligation which bound the inferior to the superior lord. It is not possible that this gathering, however great, should have been more than very partial, but such as were present affirmed the principle that the King of England was owed direct service by the nobles of the country, even when they did not hold directly of him as their feudal chief. It was possible for the Conqueror to set up this double system in England on account of two things: first, the fact that the Conquest had left a free field for moral action, and, secondly, that the scale of the country was small enough to permit a centralized arrangement of this kind. Such a personal bond between king and subject was exceptional in feudal society. In France the Crown had no claim to the services of any lord of whom the king was not direct overlord. A man holding a village or manor could be summoned to serve in war by his overlord, but not by the king in person. The greatest overlords, those at the heads of the main provinces, such as Flanders or Normandy, were virtually independent sovereigns,

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The King of France could not successfully summon them to follow him in war. At the best he could only hope to set himself in their place. The Crown only gradually acquired those great feudal provinces, sometimes by a marriage, sometimes by a veiled form of conquest. But of such great feudal provinces in England there were none. What would have corresponded to them would have been Scotland and Wales and Ireland, but these were as yet wholly independent of the King of England. In France, then, the great model of feudalism over all the West, the king had direct superiority over the nobles of his own demesne, but those of, say, Brittany or Normandy or Champagne had nothing to do with him; they owed duty to their own count or duke, who was virtually monarch of his district. In England it was otherwise, and remained otherwise throughout English history until the end of the feudal system. There was no district, not even a county palatine like Cheshire, the landowners of which were responsible to their local chief and not to the king; everywhere the landowner was responsible to the king *as well as* to his local chief. This arrangement profoundly affected the course of English history from the Conquest onward, helping to mould the unity of the country. In especial it gave the king the right to send out his judges everywhere and try cases throughout the territory. And when national councils arose, later called Parliaments, this arrangement made for the summoning of one national council and Parliament, whereas in France there were many, one in one province and one in another, with only very occasional general meetings of the whole realm.

The second great act was the survey, which came to be known by the popular nickname of Doomsday, or Domesday Book. It was not a complete survey of all the land, such as a modern Government would make, and the misreading of a contemporary rhetorical phrase to that effect has confused a proper understanding of it. The motive of the survey was not to get general statistics about the realm of England as a whole, but only to make certain, in detail, of all the payments due to the king from the *land*—as distinguished from sums paid through the administration of justice, through the use of the forests, etc. William sent out officials (legates) whose duty it was to hold an inquiry in each hundred (the hundred was then the administrative unit). To this inquiry came the priest of

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each village and six villagers, who were sworn to testify to the amount of arable land, pasture, wood, etc., and how the land was held, so that computation could be made of what the 'worth' of the manor was, the word 'worth' meaning the surplus income—the income received by the lord from the profits of his own land, dues from his villagers, serf and free, and dues from his rights over the local woods, peat, water, etc. The survey was also of especial use to William as telling him how much arable land there was liable to pay the old tax of Danegeld, which he had inherited from his predecessors and which was payable in proportion to acreage.

The record as it has come down to us is in two very different parts, and far from complete; it leaves out the four northern counties, London, Winchester, and certain other towns; and whereas the three eastern counties are given in detail, the others are given in a much more summary fashion. Unfortunately the meaning of the terms used is for the most part uncertain, there exists a doubt upon nearly all of them; but Domesday gives us one very valuable piece of evidence at least, from which a rough census can be made—for though we do not quite know what was meant by the word 'hide,' or even by the word 'virgate,' we may safely estimate a ploughland as something between 80 and 120 acres. This gives us some guide, though unfortunately only a vague one, to the population of England at that date, 1087. We find an England with certainly more than six millions, but hardly more than eight million acres under crop, and this should give a population of something between four and six millions. In other words, the England of the Conquest was very much the same in numbers as it remained throughout the Middle Ages and on till the seventeenth century, though, of course, with large fluctuations in times of pestilence.

**The End of the Reign.** William's reign had been disturbed, after he had finally settled England, by partial rebellions of his own nobles and by the continuous necessity of holding his Norman frontiers against his own feudal overlord in France, the King of France at Paris. He also had to meet rebellion from his own eldest son, Robert, but he maintained till his death his wealth and power and position as the greatest of the reigning figures of his time. It was in an operation connected with the perpetual frontier skirmishing with the forces of the King of

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France that William met his death, in the disputed territory of the Vexin, on the middle Seine, between Paris and Rouen—that is, in the marches between the direct dominions of the King in Paris and the Duke of Normandy. He had, on the Assumption, August 15, 1087, looted and burned the town of Mantes. He had become very fat and unwieldy; his horse stumbled, throwing him against the pommel of the saddle with such violence that he did not recover from the blow. He was taken to a monastery on the outskirts of Rouen, where he lingered through the rest of the month and the first week of September, but on September 9, 1087, he died, at the age of about sixty, and was buried at Caen, in the Abbaye aux Hommes which he had himself built.

The disposition of his possessions was his own. He left Normandy and the Continental possessions to his eldest son, Robert; to his second son, William Rufus ('the Red'), he intended to leave England, though he did not do so in so many words, bidding Lanfranc decide; while to the third son, Henry, he gave a considerable capital in money, but no land.

### WILLIAM II (SURNAMED RUFUS)

**Character of Rufus.** In early times, and with kings really governing, the character of a ruler made a great difference. It is a proof of how strongly William the Conqueror had founded his power that his son Rufus, a man not yet thirty, violent and most unpopular, should have done so little to ruin his father's work. He was vicious and depraved, almost a byword, but he was courageous and full of energy like all that family; also, like his father before him and his brother after him, he had considerable power of intrigue and the patience to wait for the fruits of intrigue. He was not directly nominated to the throne by William, but given a letter to show to Lanfranc, and he was waiting with this letter at Toucques, just outside where Deauville now stands on the coast of Normandy, when the news of his father's death reached him. Lanfranc summoned the great feudal council of nobles and bishops, recommended young William to them, and he was crowned on September 26, 1087.

Next year, at the opening of the season, at Easter, the inevitable feudal rebellion broke out, led by Odo, the young

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King's uncle. Rufus mastered it with the help of large English levies, who followed him willingly. He was thus secure on his throne, but so long as Lanfranc lived he stood in such awe of the old man that he did nothing extravagant. There was one significant incident at that moment. The Bishop of Durham, who had rebelled, was summoned to the King's court to be tried, and pleaded, in the new reforming spirit of the Church, that no lay court could try a bishop; and Rufus allowed him to cross the Channel, as though he were about to appeal to Rome. On May 28, 1089, Lanfranc died, and the worst of Rufus's character came out, as also the strong political side of it. He began to be extortionate, he used brutal ministers, and his personal vices and those he tolerated at his court became more conspicuous. But he laid the foundations of increased political power. He restored the Bishop of Durham to his bishopric, used him to help repel a Scottish invasion, and had renewed to him the oath of fealty which the King of Scots had already given to his father. He occupied Carlisle and garrisoned it, and the border was fixed very much where it is to-day.

**The Dispute of the Investitures.** The better organized powers of the Papacy and the strong tide of reform strengthening the Church for the last lifetime had caused to rise upon the Continent the great quarrel of the investitures. But it had not as yet affected England. When a bishop was appointed he had hitherto—that is, for some generations past—been confirmed in his office by the king. It was in practice the king who made the bishop. But it had always been maintained in the original spirit of the Christian Church that the office of bishop was independent of the lay power, and only the ecclesiastical power (which now meant in practice the Pope) could grant investiture to the spiritual office. The Papacy stood out for the full right of investiture, denying that the lay power—that is, the Emperor or the King—had the right to make a bishop. The ceremony of making a bishop involved the symbols of the ring and the staff, and the Papacy claimed that the giving of those symbols should be in Church hands. Hitherto the main quarrel had only been between the Pope and the Emperor in this matter—that is, between the Pope and the ruler who was ultimately superior over all the Germanies and most of Italy. William the Conqueror had not been troubled by the quarrel,

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though it was going on in his time, nor had William Rufus been troubled by it in the earlier part of his reign. After he had kept the Archbishopric of Canterbury open for a long time in order to enjoy the revenues of it, there was at last nominated to the headship of the Church in England St Anselm, towards the end of 1093.

**St Anselm.** St Anselm was a very remarkable man—indeed, one of the greatest men in all European history. He profoundly affected all the future of our religion by his writings, particularly the *Cur Deus Homo*, with its theory of the Redemption. Though Archbishop of Canterbury, the part he played in English politics is the lesser side of him. It is a proof of how the Conquest had restored England to the full comity of Europe that three Archbishops of Canterbury within three generations of the battle of Hastings—Lanfranc, St Anselm, and St Thomas—should appear in the universal story of Christendom as three of its major figures. St Anselm also impressed the England of his time as deeply as had his senior, Lanfranc, though in a different fashion. For the talents of Lanfranc had been those of an organizer and ruler, teacher and administrator, while St Anselm was especially remarkable for his genius in philosophy and his holiness. He came from Aosta, in one of the French-speaking valleys of the Alps, the son of a noble there; he had gone to the great Abbey of Bec, in Normandy, during Lanfranc's time and formed part of that group of men whom the Conqueror had known and revered. It is to be remarked that he received the investiture of Canterbury from Rufus; he took the pastoral staff, the temporal goods—that is, the lands feudally held by the Archbishopric—and the spiritual position, so far as symbols could convey the fact, from the King and from the King only. He was an elderly man of sixty, not robust, who somewhat astonished his contemporaries by the tenacity he was about to show. Such a man was bound to quarrel with such another man as Rufus: during the vacancy of the Archbishopric lands had been sold irregularly by the King; against this St Anselm protested, as also against the King's hesitation in allowing him to go to Rome and in accepting the lawful Pope Urban rather than the Anti-Pope who had been set up against him. Rufus thought of deposing Anselm, but found that he had not the power to do so against the spirit of the time, which was opposing more

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and more the pretensions which the civil government had taken to itself before the new reform in the Church.

During all this first part of the quarrel William was continually retreating, nor was the issue settled in his time, but only in the next reign. Towards the end of Rufus' short life, four years after St Anselm had been made Archbishop of Canterbury, the quarrel with the King became acute. The Archbishop refused to appear at the King's court, and again insisted that he must go to Rome and put the whole matter before the Pope. We must remember in all this that the encroachments of the lay power over the Church had come to be thought of as traditional rights. Therefore Anselm was not supported by his bishops in thus appealing to Rome; he was almost alone in his resistance; but so powerful was the European feeling of the time in favour of strengthening the ecclesiastical claims that the King had to let him go. He sailed from Dover on November 8, 1097, and he and Rufus did not meet again, St Anselm remaining in France and Italy until the end of the reign.

**The Acquisition of Normandy.** Meanwhile the political side of William's character and its talents were shown in the acquisition of Normandy. There was a sort of necessary tendency for the dominions of the Conqueror's house on both sides of the Channel to come into one hand, but as Robert had been left the Duchy it remained legally his, and only came gradually into the possession of his brother's successors, the Kings of England. The foundation of that recovery of Normandy was laid by William Rufus.

The first great Crusade for recovering the Holy Sepulchre and thrusting back the Mohammedan from the Holy Places, and thus weakening Mohammedanism upon all its frontiers where it was pressing upon Christendom, had been preached in France in the year 1095. Robert of Normandy joined the Crusade with enthusiasm, and borrowed the large funds necessary for action from his brother William, giving as security the revenues of the Duchy. This gave the King of England a foothold. He could supervise and even administer the Norman revenue, he could actually take over the government of part of the Duchy; and by Easter of 1097, when he returned to England from an expedition beyond the Channel, he had laid the foundations of what was later to become a real

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union between Normandy and the English Crown, as strong as had been the union under the Conqueror himself.

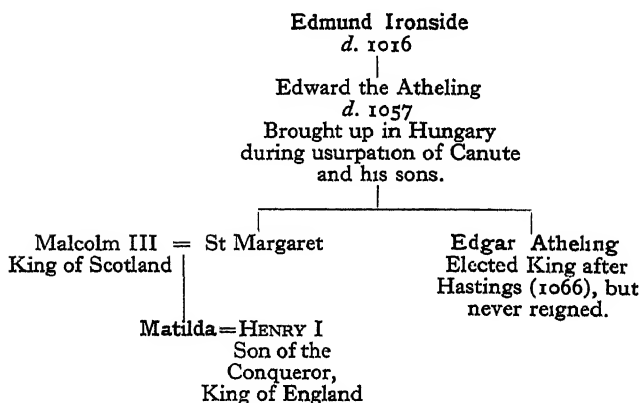
**The End of the Reign.** Had William Rufus survived it is possible, in spite of his successful policy in Normandy, that the Conqueror's effort would have failed. He was increasingly unpopular, he had no heir, he had quarrelled with the Church; anything might have happened if his reign had been prolonged—most probably a feudal anarchy, followed perhaps by the raising up of a local dynasty. At any rate, the renewed connection of England with the civilized West would have been imperilled. Luckily he died, still a young man, on Thursday, August 2, 1100. He had gone out hunting in the New Forest, with his younger brother Henry, when an arrow, shot no one knows by whom (the blame was laid on a Picard, Tirel, of Poix, who fled at once overseas and always denied his guilt), struck him—perhaps by design and perhaps in error—and he fell dead.

### HENRY I (SURNAMED BEAUCLERC OR THE SCHOLAR)

**Character of Henry. His English Marriage and Charter.** The Conqueror's youngest son had probably or certainly been born in England, and this gave him some vague but not insignificant claim upon the country. There was no one to decide his claim; the elder brother, Robert, might justly advance his own name, and Rufus had made no decision nor left any orders. But Henry was not only very energetic—like all those of his blood—he was not only young (barely thirty-two), but he had the great advantage over most of his contemporaries and all his rivals of a well-trained mind. He had been educated with care at the monastery at Abingdon, was fluent in his Latin, possibly conversant with Greek, curious in natural history; and he was also at pains to learn the Anglo-Saxon dialect which had been the language of the court before Edward the Confessor, and in which most of his lesser ministers of native birth would still speak, though French was gaining rapidly. He knew a good deal of the past, he had considerable reading, and the whole of his long reign—thirty-five years—shows foresight and a spirit of continuity. He was a short, thickset man, with very dark hair and a broad, commanding

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### THE ROYAL HOUSE OF WESSEX AND ENGLAND AFTER THE NORMAN CONQUEST



forehead, and he was rapid in action of all kinds, especially in the dispatch of business. One might almost say that to his character, even more than to that of his father, was due the permanent establishment of the French-speaking dynasties in England.

He seized the treasury at Winchester on the Friday, the morrow of his brother's death, and on the Saturday rode at great speed all the fifty-odd miles to London, and had himself anointed and crowned on the Sunday. Almost at the same moment he issued a charter, which was used as the basis of negotiation with the king all through the Middle Ages: a document of the first importance. In it he pledged himself to the preservation of the feudal customs already established, the freedom of the Church, and the maintenance of the traditional laws. He recalled St Anselm, renewing the negotiations about the investitures on which his dead brother had proved so recalcitrant, and—a momentous step—married Matilda, the daughter of St Margaret, the Queen of Scotland. Matilda was thus the niece of Edgar the Atheling (St Margaret's brother), the heir to the house of Wessex, and the marriage increased the national character of Henry's position.

**The King's Court, or Curia Regis.** As Henry I's reign corresponds with the next great step in social and political development in the Middle Ages—for it is in his time that we

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find the political and social system of England taking on a new development—it is also in his time that institutions which were to endure for centuries, especially that of delegation or representation, began to appear. The King's court (or Curia Regis) was a sort of branch of the great feudal council which surrounded the medieval King. But it could not be called part of that council; it was mainly made up of officials whom the King nominated; it acted both as a collector and administrator of the royal revenues, as the principal court of central justice, and as the chief place of record.

All our central judicial and fiscal institutions grow from the seeds laid in this first generation of the twelfth century under Henry I. There were, side by side with this new central organization, the old courts, which worked locally: the court of the shire, held by the sheriff of the shire, and the lesser courts below this, the courts of the hundreds, which met twice a year. In these last there appears that interesting point just mentioned of delegation or representation, which was to play so large a part in every Christian country throughout the Middle Ages. When some point at issue had to be decided in the hundred court, and when the lord or his agent could not come, it was ordered that the lord's steward, permanently resident in the village, and four of the serfs—that is, of the half-free peasants (men who were proprietors of the land of the village, but who still had to do so much work on the lord's land away from their own on certain fixed days)—should come and give evidence as to the general knowledge of the community upon the custom determining some point at issue—as to the dues attached to a particular bit of land, for instance, or the respective rights of lord and serfs in the village woods. Something of the same kind had already appeared when the Conqueror had sent for local men to swear to the local records in his great survey; but the four serfs who were thus summoned were summoned with a very interesting new phrase, which ran, *Assint pro omnibus* ("Let them be present in the place of all the rest")—that is, as *representatives*. This new article brought in from abroad by the Norman kings did not yet stand for a political *principle*—it was only as yet a convenient piece of machinery, and, of course, it had existed on the Continent long before it came here; but it may be regarded as the origin of that idea of representation which has played so large a part in the

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history of Western Christendom, and which led at last to Parliaments.

It is also under Henry I that we find the beginnings of an organized treasury. Those of the King's officials who looked after the revenue were collected under the term 'Exchequer'—which means 'chess-board.' The name came from Normandy, where a particular stone table at Rouen, divided up into black and white squares, had long been used for the making up of the state accounts and the paying in of dues to the great monarchical overlord, the Duke of Normandy.

**The Settlement of the Investitures.** It was under Henry I also that the quarrel of the investitures was settled, and it was a complete victory for neither party. Henry especially asked St Anselm, now very old and feeble, to journey to Rome for him and come to some agreement, in the year 1106; on the Assumption (August 15) of that year the thing was arranged. A newly appointed bishop was to receive what were called his 'temporalities'—that is, the land providing him with the income of the see—from the King, and to do homage for them like any other baron; but the ring and the staff, which were the emblems of spiritual power, the King abandoned. Some years later a similar compromise settled the affair finally upon the Continent also. This compromise took place at the Abbey of Bec, and it was enrolled in the following August, that of 1107, in Henry's feudal council held in London. Not long after, on the Wednesday of Holy Week, April 21, 1109, St Anselm died in Canterbury in his monastic palace.

**The Final Acquisition of Normandy.** Henry carried on the work which his brother William had begun, and made himself master of Normandy. Though the thing was perhaps inevitable, for the tendency of the great nobles who held land on both sides of the sea to work under one authority was strong, yet the means which Henry employed were tortuous. He obtained fiefs on Norman soil which he could directly control either himself or through the members of his family (such as Breteuil, for one of his illegitimate daughters); he interfered more and more with Norman affairs, forcing Robert, his brother, into a quarrel; he used the wealth of England to raise mercenaries, trained as his brother's feudal levies were never trained, and on September 28, 1106, six weeks after the settlement of the investiture business at Bec, he fought the decisive

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battle of Tinchebrai. Robert fell a prisoner to Henry, who never again allowed his brother to go free, though he was given, of course, the respect and maintenance due to his rank and was only kept within the walls of the royal castles. He died in one of these—that of Cardiff—in 1134, and thenceforward the union of England and Normandy was accomplished. Robert's son William (surnamed Clito) could do nothing effective.

### **Death of Henry's Heir. Importance of Matilda.**

Henry I of England had one son, his heir, William, a young man who in the year 1120 was about eighteen years of age. He was morally of little worth, and would possibly, had he lived, have helped to undo his father's great work. But he did not live, for he was drowned in the wreck of a vessel called *The White Ship*, an accident due to some drunken orgy or other before they sailed. The blow crushed his father, who seemed to think that there sank with it the chances of the new dynasty; but as it turned out the disappearance of this young William helped on the future great Anglo-French realm which nearly became the universal power over the West of Europe. It raised the descendants of the Conqueror to the highest place among the princes of Europe. The thing fell about thus.

Henry's only daughter, who was now his heiress, bearing the same name as her mother, Matilda, had been married to the Emperor Henry V at thirteen, and had been away in Germany for many years. On Christmas Day of the next year, 1126, Henry's great barons did homage to Matilda—she was now a widow, the Emperor being dead—and acknowledged her their "lady," but not using the word 'Queen.' And it is specially to be noted that Stephen of Blois, another grandchild of William's, joined in the homage that was done. William Clito's claim was supported by the French King, but it came to nothing. The real issue was to be between Matilda and Stephen of Blois—Stephen being a son of William the Conqueror's daughter, who had married the Count of Blois, and having the advantage in the claim that he was a man (for direct rule by a woman seemed unsuited to the time); Matilda having the claim that she was the daughter of the reigning English King, but the disadvantage of her sex. On the other hand, she had received the homage of the whole court and of Stephen himself.

Now, in 1128 there followed a most important event. The widowed Empress Matilda, who even now was no more than

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twenty-five years of age, married, under the authority of her father, Geoffrey, the son and heir of the feudal state of Anjou. The family name of the house of Anjou was Plantagenet, from the bunch of heath which they wore as a badge. The Plantagenet was ten years younger than she was, and five years later a boy was born to the couple and christened Henry. The birth of this child was of the first importance. William Clito was dead, killed in the siege of a city of Flanders; and the little Henry Plantagenet when grown to manhood would be the natural leader of the English and Norman barons, if he should prove a good organizer and a good fighter. He was the grandson of King Henry of England, the great-grandson of the Conqueror, and everything pointed to him as the natural heir. But when or if he should come to the English throne there would arise a new realm greater than the old, having the county of Anjou added to Maine and Normandy and England. Two years after the birth of this boy, on December 2, 1135, Henry I died.

### THE FEUDAL CHAOS

**Stephen of Blois seizes the Throne.** Nineteen years of political confusion followed the death of Henry I, through the conflicting claims of his daughter Matilda to the throne, and those of her cousin Stephen of Blois. The confusion was accompanied by a good deal of social misery, because the absence of an admitted monarch strong enough to control the great and to protect the weak always led to that, but this social trouble has probably been exaggerated through the effect of one rhetorical passage in the chronicles. We do, however, know that unlicensed castles sprang up everywhere, many of them no more than stockades, but each of them guaranteeing the independence of some little local lord. There were hundreds of these, and they testified to the chaos of the time. But society was solidly organized, and the life of the ordinary peasant or townsman went on much as it had under the undivided rule of the Conqueror and his sons.

There were three episodes in these nineteen years, and the issue of each of them as well as the final issue really depended upon the great Churchmen. The bishops were barons, many of them closely related to the great lay nobles, and the Church was the one coherent governing unit in that society. Of the two can-

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didates, Matilda and Stephen, it was always that one which had the support of the Church who had a temporary success.

The first episode was one of five and a half years, during which Stephen of Blois ruled as King of England, mainly through the support of his brother, the powerful Bishop of Winchester, who was also Papal Legate.

The second episode is the rise and fall of Matilda, who comes in through the support of the bishops and loses her position again through the loss of that support. This part of the confusion lasted for six years, up to 1147.

The third episode sees the appearance of young Henry Plantagenet, who by 1149 was old enough to play some part and who succeeds to the crown on Stephen's death in 1154.

Stephen was at first supported by the main part of the Barony, and especially by the great Earl of Gloucester, who commanded the Severn valley and thus the West of England. He was one of Henry I's many illegitimate children, and therefore half-brother to Matilda, but he threw his influence into the scale for Stephen. In the third year of Stephen's reign the King of Scotland invaded, but was defeated at Northallerton in a battle which came to be known as the Battle of the Standard. This success, though it was not achieved by Stephen in person, but by the local levies in the North of England, should have strengthened his hold over the crown, but there came a quarrel with a group of bishops which was fatal to him. This group consisted of the Bishop of Salisbury, who was a mere feudal baron of a licentious and brutal sort, and his two nephews, the Bishops of Lincoln and Ely. They held castles and garrisons and were almost independent of the crown. Stephen therefore marched against them, made the Bishop of Salisbury and one of his nephews a prisoner, and besieged the other nephew in the castle of Devizes. The bishops as a whole stood by their unworthy representative, on the principle that the Church was immune from the lay power. A synod was called. The crisis was Matilda's obvious opportunity.

**Matilda's Attempt to Rule.** Matilda landed at the end of September 1139 at the mouth of the Arun, in Sussex, and was besieged by Stephen in Arundel Castle; but he allowed her to get off to her brother, the Earl of Gloucester, at Bristol, believing that he would be stronger if she were out of the way than he would if he kept her prisoner. Also he had the support

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of the merchants of London, on which he thought he could rely. But the new Archbishop of Canterbury, a Norman, supported Matilda, and so did the town and garrison of Dover, which commanded the main entry into the country. There was confused fighting all up and down England until, on February 2, Candlemas, 1141, sixteen months after Matilda's landing, Stephen was defeated by Matilda's party and taken prisoner at Lincoln. He was carried off to the castle at Bristol, where he was kept a prisoner. But Matilda mishandled her opportunity; she quarrelled with the Londoners before she had time to be crowned, and this was important because the coronation was what gave authority to a king or queen; it was a sort of sacramental act, and until a monarch were crowned he was not regarded as possessed of full power. Matilda became no more than a sort of figurehead for those who wanted to resist Stephen, and confused civil war went on for years, until she finally left England in 1147.

**The Advent of Henry Plantagenet.** Stephen was now in power again, but his power was a very shadowy one, for the turmoil had gone on too long to be set right. The Archbishop who had supported Matilda refused to crown Stephen's son and heir, Eustace; that was the cause of a new quarrel with the Church; but in 1149 things began to change, for in that year young Henry Plantagenet was old enough to bear arms and to appear as a leader. The only obstacle to his succeeding Stephen was the presence of an heir to the existing King, his son Eustace. The father of Henry Plantagenet died when the young man was eighteen, and the next year he married Eleanor, the heiress of Aquitaine, who brought with her something like half France—nearly all that lay to the west south of the Loire, Poitou and the Limousin and Gascony, and everything up to the Pyrenees. Her territories were, indeed, feudally subject to the King of France at Paris—he was their overlord; but they were in no way directly subject, any more than was Normandy or Anjou itself; the King in Paris got homage from them, but no soldiers.

Young Henry Plantagenet was now, therefore, by far the greatest monarch in Christendom, and the wealthiest; for even the Emperor, though he could still raise very great forces, had not so direct a rule over his territories as had the Angevin. The Pope also supported Henry, and forbade the English bishops to crown Stephen's son. Such obstacle as that son presented was

## THE CONQUEST

removed in the year 1153 by his death; in the November of that same year Stephen and Henry at Westminster arranged terms. Henry was recognized as heir to the crown of England. He was now a young man of twenty-one, short, round-headed, broad-shouldered, and full of activity, as were all those early French-speaking kings of England; he had scant red hair, and was for ever moving about—the whole of his life was spent, one may say, in the saddle. He tended to become fat as he grew older, like his great-grandfather, the Conqueror, but his energy survived to the end. He developed a very retentive memory and great powers of intrigue, which astonished the people of his time. His weakness lay in this, that he had intense moments of passion, when he behaved almost like a madman—yet he was a man temperate in food and especially in drink, observant, and decisive. His character and personality was to impress itself upon his time deservedly, for he made, as much as was made by, the circumstances in which he lived.

In the following year, 1154, Stephen died, on October 24, and Henry Plantagenet succeeded.

## IV PLANTAGENET

### HENRY II, THE FIRST PLANTAGENET

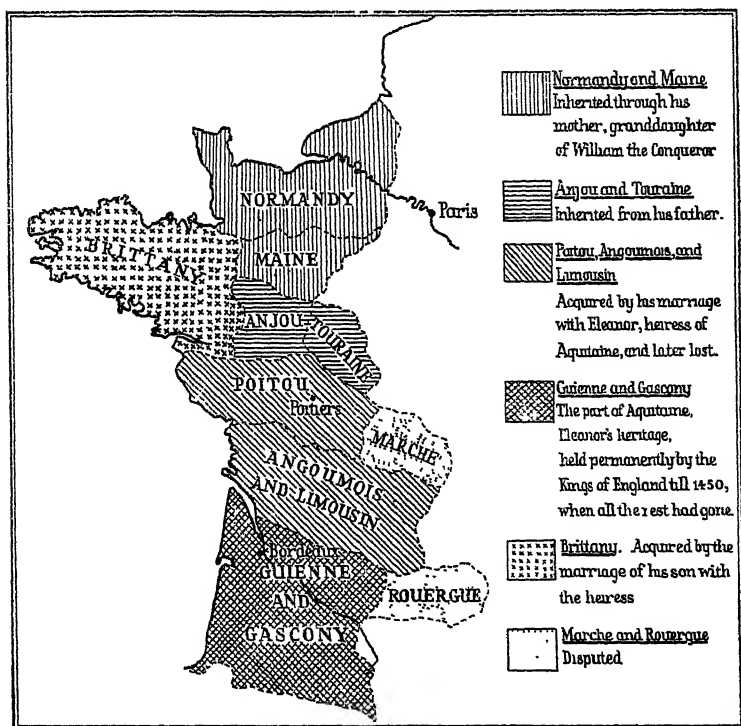
**The Anglo-French Realm of the West.** The coming to the throne of Henry Plantagenet at the age of twenty-one, with presumably a long reign before him and such vast possessions concentrated in his single control, was a moment which might have seen the foundation of a new Western Empire in Christendom.

In his long reign Henry only just failed to achieve that object; and the memory of it continued to affect the English monarchy throughout the Middle Ages. The kings of England were perpetually trying to recover that dominating position over the West which Henry Plantagenet had held: their effort filled the Middle Ages and all the English story for three hundred years.

It must be remembered that by this time—1154—all the deciding, governing part of England was French-speaking. The influence of the Northern French families and their speech had greatly increased; it was now nearly a century since the Conquest—the oldest men living could not remember the days before Hastings, and though, of course, the great majority of people living in England spoke various dialects of what is generally termed Anglo-Saxon, yet the old official Saxon language spoken at the English court at Winchester before Edward the Confessor had lost its position, and the whole of the governing class, the officials, and the great mass of those below them, in increasing numbers, were using Northern French as their only tongue. The position was coming to be something like what we have in Wales to-day, where the Welsh language is the language of most of the people, but the wealthier classes are English-speaking, and English is the general tongue of the civilization to which Wales belongs. And there were in the England of that day, just as there are now in the Wales of to-day, a very large number of people who were bilingual, who could speak the tongue of the governing classes—lawyers, armed men, squires, great barons,

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principal Churchmen, and the rest—but who also spoke in their local dialects. We must further remember that the Crusades were at this moment producing their fullest effect. The Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, with its French-speaking nobility, was solidly established; and though what is known as the Second



CONTINENTAL FIEFS OF HENRY II

Crusade, that against Damascus, had failed, the influence of the French-speaking nobles was universal throughout the Mediterranean. The Norman kingdom was firmly established in Sicily and South Italy, and many French-speaking knights came over the Pyrenees to help in the pushing back of the Mohammedans in Spain. In general, one type of society, speaking the same tongue, having the same feudal organization, the leaders of it largely intermarried, ruled from the Scottish mountains

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to the Levant. One found it everywhere: the 'Frankish Chivalry.'

Now, the nucleus of this was the empire (as we may justly call it) which begins with Henry Plantagenet. It all held together on both sides of the Channel, and bade fair to grow into something more powerful than the old half-Germanic Empire, which was beginning to lose its battle against the Papacy. As like as not the Plantagenet state would absorb by marriage or otherwise the Capetian monarchy at Paris—the nominal suzerainty of Poitou, Aquitaine, Normandy, and the rest—and might at last become the one main Christian state after the pattern which Charlemagne had failed to establish.

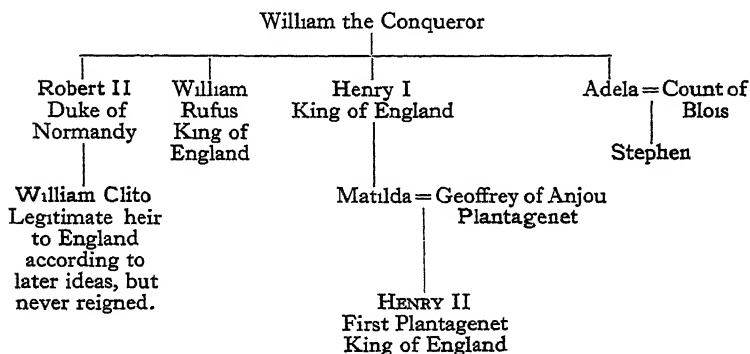
**Development of the Royal Courts.** This great realm of England formed the most important part of the Anglo-French territory, through its wealth and its size, compared with those of the other provinces. In acreage it rivalled, though it was not quite equal to, the whole of the Continental possessions of the Plantagenets, even when these came to include Brittany, through the marriage of Henry's son with the heiress of that duchy. The revenues of England had always been high—that is, the *proportion* of the national wealth which found its way into the English Exchequer and could be controlled by the reigning King was very large in comparison with the *proportion* of such wealth available in the Continental provinces, and to the monarchs of other states. The English kingship got more out of the English people than did the English king, as Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou, etc., out of those provinces. And he got more than did the king of France or the lesser kings in Spain. It was thus his immediately available wealth, quite as much as the extent of his territory, which gave Henry his very high position in the Europe of that moment. With this financial and political power went the rapid development of the royal government—that is, of the courts. The Curia Regis, the development of which we saw beginning under Henry I, grew in complexity and function throughout the reign; and its three principal activities—financial, judicial, and executive—were clearly separated. The judicial side, the Curia sitting *in banco*—‘on the bench’—was the origin of what we still call the Bench of Judges. The Exchequer (which was kept at Winchester during this reign, but moved to Westminster under Henry's sons), already an existing function before Henry's time, was now

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in full activity and all its main lines established. The Curia also, in its capacity of private council, looked after the executive work of the state. We still keep the *names* of these three divisions, the Exchequer, the King's Bench, and the (Privy) Council, though they mean, of course, to-day something quite different from what they meant then.

One important development must be noted on the judicial side. The court had hitherto sent out its officials to judge occasional cases distant from the capital; these emissaries were now working on a regular system; the characteristic English

### THE ENTRY OF THE PLANTAGENETS



institution of judges following 'circuits' and working 'in eyre' (which means 'on travel'), with a system of 'assizes' (the French for 'sittings'), was established.

Side by side with this went the growth of the jury. The jury—that is, a batch of men sworn to give true testimony—we have seen already at work in elementary forms. It was an institution of French origin brought in by the Conqueror and used in the Domesday survey and later in other capacities. You now get under Henry II the group of local gentry, men of position, who are sworn to 'present'—that is, to discover and bring forward—men presumably guilty of crimes. From this comes the grand jury, which has now for long been obsolescent and is to-day actually obsolete. But what we call the common jury—the working jury with which we are all acquainted—was a later development. When evidence is doubtful the jury to-day has to decide upon the question of fact—whether this or that were

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really done, and if so by whom—but this question of fact under Henry II was still being decided by the ordeal, which was also called the *Lex Terræ* (*i.e.*, 'custom of the land'). This ordeal was either in the form of ordeal by battle (a duel) or of hot iron or water (the suspected person having to hold hot iron or put his hand into boiling water), and was used to decide a doubt. To be defeated in ordeal by battle or to remain unhealed after a specific time after the ordeal by hot iron or water was held to be a proof of guilt. The practice was barbaric and unreasonable, but of very ancient tradition. It was breaking down at this moment, though not yet abolished. The Church Council which began to put an end to it was not to meet till more than twenty years after Henry's death. Gradually the ordeal was replaced by the common jury, and men swore to examine the evidence and decide upon it.

**The Challenge to the Church.** With the continual advance of the new civilization of the Middle Ages there came everywhere a challenge thrown down by the lay power to the Church; and this challenge went on side by side with the continued growth of power and organization within the Church itself and the increase in the strength of the Papacy which had been continuous since Hildebrand, and thus going on for a hundred years. The Church was the universal Christian thing, the unifying principle of all European civilization; it was the ground upon which men of every class met and the avenue whereby men of every class could rise to eminence. The Church was not only the vital principle of all that society, but the safeguard of popular custom and traditional morals. The growing power of the state could not but come into conflict with the Church. This was most apparent in the struggle between the Papacy and the Empire, because the Emperor was, in theory, the universal lay head; and even in practice he was the political head of Italy and of the capital city of Rome, as well as of the Germanies. But there was bound also to come a clash with the great Angevin power of the West. The larger struggle between Emperor and Pope went on into the next century and was not settled for another hundred years, but a great deal was to turn upon the issue of the earlier clash between the new Angevin monarchy—the first Plantagenet—and the Church, though the issue appeared to be a smaller one than that great affair between the Emperor and the Pope.

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**St Thomas of Canterbury.** There was in the England of that day a very remarkable personality, the son of a Norman settled in London, by name Thomas à Becket. He was some fifteen years older than the King, a cleric, and still under thirty, when he was advanced (before Henry was King) by the Archbishop of Canterbury (who came from the same part of Normandy as Thomas's father). The Archbishop took him into his household, had him trained in Church law, and used him in various important offices.

He was a very tall and strong man, and one of dominating personality; he had pleaded Henry's cause before the Pope as against Eustace, the son of Stephen; the year after Henry's accession he was made Chancellor—that is, chief minister. Seven years later, in 1162, he was somewhat suddenly and unexpectedly made Archbishop of Canterbury. He had hitherto been the great friend as well as the chief minister of the King, and after him was by far the first figure in the realm, when, in the following year, 1163, in the autumn thereof, he was summoned to Westminster with the other bishops, and they were asked collectively, as the authorities of the Church in England, to transfer to the King their jurisdiction over clerics who might be accused of crime.

It was a point of the highest importance. Although Henry pretended that he was only asking for the restoration of an ancient custom, he was really asking for a revolution. The Church had been self-governing, exercising her own discipline over the members of her own hierarchy, and this proposal of the young Plantagenet King, had it succeeded, would have been the beginning of a subjection of the Church to the state.

The King had strong arguments on his side: in older and simpler times the word 'cleric' had usually meant the priesthood and the deacons and sub-deacons, together with a comparatively small number of minor officials; but the growth of the new civilization, with its great schools and its increasing administrative activities, had produced a very large class of men who, though nowhere near priesthood, were *technically* 'clerics,' and therefore responsible only to the authority of the Church, though in daily life practically members of the lay state.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, at first accepted this demand of the King's to try the "criminous clerks" in his own royal courts. The Pope, Alexander III, was

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anxious to be on good terms with Henry because in his great struggle with the Emperor he wanted the support of England and France, and, though Becket still hesitated, the promise to accept Henry's demand was given. Early in the next year, 1164, the Great Council of Magnates—that is, the bishops and the greater barons—met at Clarendon (a royal estate and palace near Salisbury, now disappeared), and St Thomas again yielded—but only after a bad quarrel which had broken out between Henry and Thomas when the Archbishop had tried to use the words “saving my Order” in his acceptance.

Immediately afterwards the famous Constitutions of Clarendon were drawn up, in sixteen points. The most important of them embodied this demand of the King's to try the “criminous clerks” in his own courts. Becket signed with the other bishops (this was in January 1164), but by the autumn of the year he had returned to his original position and was certain that he had done wrong in signing. He felt this so strongly that he forbade himself to say Mass, and sent word to the Pope asking for absolution from the promise he had given. He failed to appear before the King's court when summoned there, was condemned for contumacy, fined a huge sum—and the quarrel with the King became violent and open. The bishops urged the head of the Church in England to give way, but he refused, and left the country at the end of the year (1164) to put the matter before the chief of Christendom. He went to see the Pope, who was at Sens, in France, and offered his resignation, which the Pope would not accept. The Pope meanwhile temporized, saying that many of the Constitutions of Clarendon were “tolerable.” Still anxious for Henry's support against the Emperor, he would not fully support Becket. There was an effort at reconciliation—due to the Pope—between Becket and the King in 1169 which only partly succeeded, for immediately afterwards, in the summer of 1170, Henry had his son crowned by the Archbishop of York, Roger, who was the personal enemy of Becket; and as the Archbishop of Canterbury alone had the right to crown the king of England or his heir, and as the thing was done in spite of even the Pope's prohibition and in spite, of course, of the protests of Becket, it was felt to be an outrage.

It was during this heated mood, with the Pope now more strongly supporting the Archbishop, that St Thomas prepared to return to England. Henry had promised to restore the

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revenues of his see, and the Pope urged him to go. St Thomas sent on before him the papal letters suspending the hostile English bishops, and landed on December 1, 1170, at Sandwich and went straight to Canterbury.

Those who had despoiled the Archbishopric during the years of St Thomas's absence, including one De Brock, who had made one of the Archbishop's castles (Saltwood) into a den of thieves, refused to give up their ill-gotten gains. On Christmas Day St Thomas excommunicated De Brock, and the continuance of the quarrel so affected Henry, where he kept his court over in Normandy, at Bures, near Bayeux, that he let drop some violent words which were interpreted by those about him, perhaps wrongly, as permission to threaten and coerce the Archbishop by force. Therefore upon Tuesday, December 29, four knights who had reached Saltwood from the King's court overseas appeared before St Thomas and demanded the absolution of the bishops. Becket refused, saying that the orders were the Pope's and that he could not disobey them. They went out, armed themselves, came back accompanied by De Brock, pursued the Archbishop into his cathedral, and there murdered him in the dusk of that day.

**The Effect of the Martyrdom of St Thomas.** The effect of this murder was enormous. It was perhaps, if we consider all its circumstances, the most important single event of the early Middle Ages. St Thomas was at once regarded as a martyr, not only by the Church whose liberties he had defended (although his own hierarchy and the Papacy had so insufficiently supported him), but particularly by the mass of the people, who felt with sound instinct that the cause of the Church was that of their own freedom and customs. The deed turned against the Plantagenet all the forces of the time, and produced a quite unexpected increase in the strength of the French monarchy—the nominal suzerain of the Plantagenet dominions in France, but really the rival of Plantagenet power. It weakened Henry's position at home and ruined his foreign position, though that ruin did not come during his own lifetime, but later, during that of his son.

This successful rivalry against the Plantagenet Henry II of the French Capetian royal house, the kings of Paris, was further increased by the accession, ten years after the murder of St Thomas (1180), of a young, highly intelligent man, Philip Augustus, to the French throne. And Henry was further

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weakened by the rebellions of his sons, aided by their mother, his wife Queen Eleanor.

**Queen Eleanor's Quarrel.** Fifteen months after the murder of St Thomas, just as his shrine was beginning to be one of the principal places of pilgrimage in Europe, Henry returned from Ireland, after an expedition which will be dealt with later, to find that his family had joined his enemies. He hastened to reconcile himself with the Pope, maintained his innocence by oath upon the Gospels, was absolved, and did public penance. But he never recovered the position he had hitherto held.

In the next year, 1173, there came a sort of universal attack upon the King: his son Geoffrey, who had married the heiress of Brittany, invaded Normandy, the King of Scotland foraged across the border, and his eldest son, Henry, and his second son, Richard, were also in rebellion. Henry did further penance the next year, publicly submitting to formal reception of the discipline at St Thomas's tomb; and he had the good fortune to capture the King of Scotland, compelling him to a further acknowledgment of the suzerainty of the English Crown and the demarcation of the border. Henry also gave some promise to the Pope that he would regard him as a feudal lord, and received moral aid from him, for the Pope threatened to excommunicate Henry's wife unless she returned to her husband. The great attack upon Henry therefore began to fail, and long before the end of the ten years after the Archbishop's death he was almost as strong as ever, as regards internal affairs, though he had to leave the government of the more distant parts of his empire to his sons. His son Geoffrey was, in any case, technically independent in Brittany, and Richard was governing Aquitaine.

But in Henry's foreign relations everything had changed; and when, in the year 1180, this new young French King Philip, who came to be called from his successes Philip Augustus, succeeded to the French monarchy, it was already clear that the ideal of a universal Anglo-French realm in the West would not be realized. The conception remained. It was attempted over and over again till it nearly reached success more than two hundred years later. It seemed a necessary fruit of a society in which all the leaders were of one French speech and all the social habits of one kind. But, as French died out in England and as the common social habit of the Middle Ages declined after 1350, one western realm proved impossible.

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**Contact with Ireland.** Coincident with the martyrdom of St Thomas there had taken place an action which was to affect all future English history profoundly. This was the contact with Ireland, which first began more than four years before the murder of St Thomas, and the first hostile actions of which took place in the eighteen months before the martyrdom at Canterbury.

This original arrival in Ireland of the French-speaking knights from England should not be regarded as a conquest; the position was more complicated than that. What led to its having the aspect of an attempted conquest (a conquest that was not really attempted until it became a religious war after the end of the Middle Ages) was at first the clash between the feudal system of the society which the French-speaking nobles brought over with them from Britain and the immemorial tribal usages of the Irish people. Later the much more violent clash between the new Protestant religion, gradually imposed upon England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that ancient Catholicism which the Irish conspicuously refused to abandon turned it into a mortal duel.

Ireland, like the rest of Christendom, was in the early Middle Ages the scene of petty wars between local chieftains (often called kings) admitting somewhat vaguely the authority of a High King. In one of these quarrels Dermot, the chief ruler of Leinster, which was the part of Ireland including the Danish walled town of Dublin, the part that looks directly towards England in the centre eastern Irish coast, was driven out, his private enemy, O'Connor, being accepted as High King. Dermot fled to England, landed in Bristol, went to find Henry in Aquitaine, and there got leave to ally himself with certain barons of Henry's to get back his kingdom.

Dermot got Richard de Clare (later given the English surname of Strongbow), whose family had been in England ever since the Conquest and who was the master of Pembrokeshire, to come over and help him, and he offered him his daughter Eva in marriage and the succession to his kingdom of Leinster after his death. He also got some of the French-speaking nobles of Wales, the sons of Gerald of Windsor (known later as the Geraldines).

These French-speaking nobles, with Welsh-speaking troops and even certain Flemings who had settled in Pembrokeshire, came over to Ireland in May 1169. In August of the next year

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(1170) De Clare himself landed, married Dermot's daughter, and marched on Dublin. In the year after, just when the storm was breaking round Henry Plantagenet on account of the Becket murder, Dermot died, and Richard de Clare became King of Leinster through the agreement made and by right of his wife. And here was the first clash between the Irish tribal custom and the feudal society with which it was now asked to mix and which was henceforward to try to dominate it. For Irish custom admitted no such feudal right of succession as that which made De Clare King of Leinster.

The choice of a local king had lain by immemorial Irish custom with the nobles, and was not of strict ancestral right. In all the Romanized part of Western Europe succession by ancestral right, and by right of marriage, was taken for granted.

In the struggle which followed the superior armament of the French-speaking nobles confirmed De Clare's power in Leinster, and he held the ports of Dublin and Wexford and Waterford; while in the same year Henry himself, after summoning De Clare as his vassal, landed at Waterford on October 17, 1171, with 500 fully armed knights, 4000 archers, and a considerable force of other mercenaries. He claimed the lordship of the whole country, acting upon a Papal document on which he based his claim to such authority. The small Irish chieftains of Munster came in to do homage, as did many on the neighbouring borders north and west, though the mass of the North and West did not appear. A letter from the Pope called on the hierarchy in Ireland to assist the new *régime*. St Laurence O'Toole, the Archbishop of Dublin, and a body of Churchmen convened for the purpose, accepted Henry's overlordship in the name of his vicegerent, whom he had left behind, for Henry himself had gone back to England precipitately on his way to France to meet the dangers rising against him there from the rebellions following on the murder of St Thomas.

Almost at once there were further clashes between the feudal conception of right and the ancient tribal arrangements of the Irish; but by 1175 a regular arrangement was negotiated known as the Treaty of Windsor, under which Rory O'Connor, the High King of Ireland, accepted Henry II, *not, indeed, as King of Ireland*, but as his feudal overlord.

**The New Taxes and the End of the Reign.** We have seen that the accession of Philip Augustus to the throne of

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France in 1180 was ominous for the continuance of the Angevin power, but as yet there was no direct attack—only the support by Philip of further rebellions against Henry. Philip of France was only eighteen years old, and circumstances had not yet developed sufficiently to permit him to attack directly, nor had he any pretext; but he had supported the second and last great rebellion of Henry's sons against him in 1183, during which Henry's eldest son (who had been given Anjou to rule) died; and Richard, a young man of twenty-five, who governed Aquitaine, began to rule in Anjou. The youngest son, John, was as yet only fifteen.

In 1186 Geoffrey of Brittany died, leaving a child, Arthur, as rightful heir to all. While this complicated situation of rebellion and disputed claims was threatening the Angevin empire there came enormous news: *the Crusading conquest in Palestine had gone; the Christian government of the Holy Land had fallen*—its army had been destroyed on the shore of the Lake of Galilee within a few miles of Nazareth, at Hattin. The prisoners had been butchered by the new Mohammedan leader, Saladin; Jerusalem had fallen; the True Cross had been dragged at a horse's tail through the streets. To finance a crusade the Church laid a tax on general wealth, an experiment hitherto unknown.

Under the shadow of such a dark and dreadful cloud the quarrel of the Angevin and the Capetian sank into unimportance. All Europe prepared for a crusade to recover the Holy Places, even the aged Emperor Barbarossa went off for the East, where he was to die. Richard, the heir to the Plantagenets, took the Cross, and Henry II, his father, took it also, as did Philip. They were not insincere in their crusading enthusiasm, but the private war was maintained. In the early summer of 1189 Richard and Philip marched against Henry; he was forced back into Anjou. He was dying and could hardly ride, and he negotiated a peace near Chinon, in the castle of that town. And on July 6, 1189, he died.

### RICHARD I (SURNAMED CŒUR-DE-LION, LION-HEARTED)

**Richard Cœur-de-Lion and England. Character of the King.** The reign of Richard I affects England very little. He spent only a few months in the island—the rest of his ten years of reign he was on the Continent or in the East on crusade.

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The man himself has had a most vivid effect upon European history, on account of his courage and tenacity in action, as also on account of the dramatic days through which he lived—which were those of the Third Crusade, the attempted recovery of Jerusalem, and the reaffirmation of the Frankish power in the East. He was approaching the age of thirty-three when he came to the throne; and, oddly enough for such a man, he was always in bad health, often actually unable to walk or to ride, given to eruptions on the skin—but always mastering these weaknesses by the violence of his will. During his campaigns he had frequently to be carried in a litter, and on the occasion when he started out on that Third Crusade wherein he became so famous it was thought that he could not survive. The moment his health allowed him to do so, however, he would put on full armour and fight on foot—even in the height of the Levantine summer. Another interesting characteristic of his was his devotion to Church services, and especially to Church music. He was true to the type of his house, though rather taller than most of them, with a round French head and prominent eyes far apart.

So far as England was concerned, Richard's younger brother, John—a lad still in his teens—was most in the public eye. His mother, Queen Eleanor, had been left Regent during Richard's absence; young John had the revenues of Derbyshire and of all the south-west (Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall) to support him. But Richard had left, as a sort of counterbalance in England to his brother and his mother, William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely and Papal Legate—a man of very strong character. His father's father had been a serf; he had a sort of monkey-face; he was lame, odd in manner—but energetic after Richard's own heart. There was a sort of duel between him and young John in all the early part of the reign, in which John relied upon the support of the merchants of London. John was intriguing to become King should Richard be killed on crusade (and many fighters did not return from the Crusades). He secretly obtained the support of Philip Augustus, who, of course, was willing to do anything to weaken the Angevin power. But the trouble was that his elder brother Geoffrey, who had acquired Brittany by marriage, and was dead, had left a young son five years old called Arthur. Arthur therefore was the direct heir of the Plantagenet house, for Richard had no heir. Arthur had been

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publicly recognized as his heir by Richard. This child later disappeared, and it was universally believed that John had murdered him.

The Third Crusade, with all its splendour, hardly concerns the history of England proper, though Richard's enduring fame in Europe depends upon it. He and his capture of Cyprus, his coming to the Holy Land in his red ship with its great red sails, his personal prowess in battle, his relations with Saladin, have formed a legend.

The Third Crusade failed. Jerusalem was not recovered, and the treacherous, cruel, but courageous Saladin remained, to the anger of Christendom, the master of the Holy Places. Richard, King of England, sailed back by way of the Adriatic, and was captured by Leopold, the Duke of Austria, who sold his rights to the Emperor, his overlord. The Emperor held him for a ransom, demanding as much as amounted to the whole normal annual revenue of the King of England. On the promise of paying this Richard was released, and landed in England in March 1194. John gave up his power as Regent, because all England rallied to Richard, and the King made Hubert Walter, the Archbishop of Canterbury, chief minister.

**The New Direct Tax.** The ransom of Richard led to an experiment in arbitrary and exceptional taxation. It was what we should call to-day a capital levy, and it must be remembered as a precedent for what later became the regular form of revenue. There was to be a tax upon every free man—a quarter of the value of all movables, about 6*d.* to 1*s.* an acre on arable land, and on the wool of certain religious orders. So heavy an impost could not be paid in full, but it was the beginning of a new system which, working at first jerkily and exceptionally, ultimately settled down on a much smaller scale to be, at the end of one long lifetime, an admitted method of raising money in times of crisis. Hitherto there had never been a levy on movable goods—furniture, hoards of money, etc.—or on incomes, save the regular feudal land dues from inferior to superior, which ultimately centred in the king; but the Church had already taxed movables for the purpose of rescuing the Holy Land, and now the state came in and followed suit.

Richard was able to hold his Continental possessions, in spite of the desire of Philip Augustus to find some cause of war; he built against Philip the great castle called Château Gaillard,

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about a day's march up the river from Rouen, in order to block the way against a French invasion of Normandy. The personality of Richard was such that he rallied a number of the Continental fiefs in his support—Toulouse, for instance, which, really held of the King of France, was willing to help him. In the year 1198 it still looked as though Richard might confirm his inheritance, so well was he supported against Philip Augustus. But in the March of the next year, while he was besieging a castle in the Limoges district in order to defend a claim for treasure, he was wounded by a blunt arrow shot from the walls, and died on April 6, 1199.

### JOHN (NICKNAMED SANSTERRE, OR LACKLAND)

**The Loss of France.** The reign of John is famous in English history for two things—the sudden loss of the Angevin possessions beyond the Channel, including even Normandy itself (with the consequent throwing back of the English monarchy, its interests and its activities, upon this island), and the Rebellion of the Rich which led to the issue of the Great Charter (*Magna Carta*).

But there was a third point in the reign, less generally famous and yet of greater moment to the history of England. It was under John that the new forms of taxation developed, and thence the representative method which later produced Parliament began.

The loss of France came thus.

Philip Augustus, taking advantage of a quarrel between John and certain feudal inferiors of his in the South, summoned John, three years after his accession, to yield up the Continental fiefs—Normandy, Anjou, Maine, and the rest—to young Arthur, the son and heir of John's elder brother, the Duke of Brittany. This was in March 1202. In the following August John captured Arthur, after besieging the lad in Mirebeau Castle, and subsequently Arthur disappeared. What made all the difference was the Breton feeling, which was violently in favour of the injured (and perhaps murdered) lad, and which spread to the neighbouring districts. Certain of the Continental nobles, notably the Lord of Alençon, in Normandy, began to join Philip Augustus against John, and in the spring of 1203 the war began. The great Pope Innocent III attempted to intervene and

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to arbitrate, but his effort was thrust aside before the autumn, and by that time Philip Augustus had sat down to besiege Château Gaillard and to begin the reduction of Normandy. It was during the ensuing winter that young Arthur was *probably* murdered by John, who had him in his power. We have no proof of the murder, but the arguments in favour of its having happened are very strong. John was unscrupulous, but above all a man of fury—and he was a very good soldier. When he felt that he had his back to the wall he would do anything. In March 1204 Château Gaillard surrendered, and shortly afterwards all Normandy was overrun. From that moment all the Angevin possessions on the Continent, save those in the South, in the Garonne valley, were lost.

**Fiscal Effect of this.** The main effect of the loss of the French possessions was fiscal. The difficulty worked both ways. The more John needed revenue to defend his declining heritage, the more shrunken were the taxable areas remaining to him to provide that revenue. The consequence was that he had to raise every penny he could from his remaining territory, which soon meant, in practice, England only, for Gascony was far off. Therefore the higher feudal nobles of England who were directly affected, including the great ecclesiastics, the bishops and archbishops, had laid upon them a burden which they could not bear. It was from this source that there followed the two memorable events of the reign—(1) the introduction of representation for purposes of national taxation, and (2) the issue of the Great Charter (Magna Carta).

**Representation.** When first the need for money became acute, in 1204, after the attack of Philip Augustus had developed, John sought for an exceptional and voluntary grant of money from his tenants, over and above the regular feudal revenue which was his as feudal overlord of all the land of England, its forests, etc.

He asked them for a tax on their goods, apart from land. This led to the 'grants' in supplement to feudal revenues. Later, in 1213, he summoned *representatives* from his estates.

Parliaments, the councils in which representatives from the mass of the freeholders met the clergy and the nobles in order to discuss exceptional grants of aid to the monarch, had arisen long before in the Pyrenees; indeed, they had appeared for nearly two centuries in those southern districts. The idea of the thing came late to England, but we must always remember that

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it was under John that it was introduced. It was not a principle or a policy; it was a mere necessity for money that had this effect; and no one foresaw to what it would lead.

**The Great Charter.** But these efforts at gathering money broke down under the acute necessities of the English Crown, as the revenue from Anjou, Normandy, and Brittany failed and the French provinces were overrun and conquered by Philip Augustus. By the year 1213 the burden had become intolerable, and there was danger of a breakdown. The chief feudal fortunes (*including, of course, the great ecclesiastical endowments*) were paying something like 50 per cent. in what we should call income tax, and Stephen de Langton, nominated by the great Pope Innocent III to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, began to lead a revolt against further payment.

Stephen was a remarkable man; a poet (in the French tongue, of course) and an acute politician. He had made his chief reputation in the University of Paris, of which he may have been Rector; the Pope had him made cardinal, and it was from Rome that he had been nominated—or, rather, under Papal auspices, elected—by the monks of Canterbury to be Archbishop. The Pope required John's aid against the Emperor, with whom he was perpetually struggling, and John took advantage of this to put pressure upon the Pope by refusing to receive Stephen de Langton in England. England had been put under an interdict by the Pope—that is, the sacraments had been refused save in cases of extreme necessity and all the externals of religion interrupted. John had been excommunicated by the Pope, who appealed to Philip Augustus in 1212 to carry out the sentence. Then John had given way, and, with the support of his barons, had sheltered himself from further trouble by calling the Pope his feudal superior, and making a small token payment of what we should call to-day about £20,000 a year, as a symbol of his new feudal position, which he hoped would give him the support of the Pope and with it the power to overcome any rebellion with which the enormous increase in taxation threatened him. He allied himself with the Emperor in a great coalition against Philip Augustus. But on July 27, 1214, this coalition was destroyed by Philip Augustus in the decisive victory of Bouvines, just outside Liile, where the English, the Anglo-Norman gentry, the Germans, and the Flemings saw their army crushed.

This disaster led to the Rebellion of the Rich, which had been

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simmering for so long in England. The nobles rose, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Langton, supported them. They prepared to demand guarantees from the King that they should suffer this exorbitant taxation no more; but then, if John could not levy it, the English kings could no longer fight the king of Paris, and would lose their provinces beyond the Channel.

The original charter granted by Henry I and confirming the existing feudal customs (which was the same thing as promising not to increase the ordinary feudal dues) was appealed to by Stephen de Langton, the Archbishop, in spite of the Pope's efforts to protect John; and on the basis of this original charter of Henry I a new and larger charter (later called, on account of its novel scope, the Great Charter) was drawn up and accepted by John on June 15, 1215.

Centuries later, in the Great Rebellion against King Charles I which destroyed monarchy in England after the Reformation, the importance of this document was vastly exaggerated, and a myth formed which completely misinterpreted its character. To this day ill-instructed people talk of it as though it were in some way the basis of the much later aristocratic Constitution of England. As a fact it was nothing but a confirmation of existing customs, and particularly desired as a safeguard against the exceptional and irregular increase of burdens due to the extremities to which John was reduced. It is true, however, that the Great Charter became a fixed point of reference whenever people wanted to prevent the increase of taxation or the change of any old custom, and was repeatedly confirmed in the ensuing generations. It lost all its meaning as the feudal system decayed and Parliament took the place of the old Feudal Council.

**Last Campaign and Death of John.** Though John had signed Magna Carta (as it was later called), he had done so under stress, and did not hold himself bound by the concession. He set out, like the great soldier he was, to recover from his defeat, and had he lived he would have succeeded in doing so. He had, with his remaining treasure, hired a number of mercenary soldiers; he began to occupy the line of the Thames, garrisoned the castles along the river, and then struck eastward to cut the Great North Road. The rebels countered his strategy by appealing to the Scots to invade, and also asking Philip Augustus's heir, Prince Louis, to come over and make himself

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King of England. The Pope protested in vain. Louis landed, took Rochester, reached London on June 2, 1216, was given homage, and seemed on the point of taking over this country and re-erecting the Anglo-French realm in another form under the kings of Paris. Now, when his son set out Philip Augustus had wisely said, "Take Dover first." This Louis, in his haste, had hesitated to do. He now had to turn back to reduce the garrison of Dover, which held for John, and that gave John his opportunity. The line of the Thames was well held, Dover held out, Worcester was captured, and John struck out suddenly on his long-intended move eastward, to cut off the North from London. Louis, who moved more slowly, failed to intercept him. John was thus on the point of winning the campaign when, as he advanced to capture the port of Lynn, in Norfolk, he fell ill. He may have been poisoned—it is unlikely. At any rate, he had only the energy left to push on to Newark, and there died on October 19, 1216, having just failed of his purpose to destroy the rebels.

But his effort was not wasted, for, as we shall see, after his death the most obnoxious clause in the Charter was dropped, and through the efforts of the Papacy the independent Plantagenet dynasty was restored in England, and the efforts of the English nobles to create an Anglo-French realm governed from Paris failed.

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**Nature of this Period.** In the thirteenth century, roughly from 1201 to 1300 (but the period somewhat overlaps the century), is the summit of the civilization of the Middle Ages. The best painting and some of the most beautiful building came later, but Christian civilization was then at its strongest and most united. It was the moment when the new architecture with the pointed arch spread everywhere; from the earlier to the later part of it the great Gothic cathedrals were completed in France, Western Germany, Northern Spain, and England. It was the full development of all the characteristic institutions of the Middle Ages, especially the Parliaments and the universities. It saw the final victory of the Papacy over the Emperor and the rise of the great new popular religious orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans. And though the Holy Land was lost, it was during this time that the Mohammedan hold upon Spain was finally broken, the Central Plateau, which is the backbone of the peninsula, being finally held after the battle of Navas in 1212. It is the lifetime of St Louis of France, the typical Christian King of the Middle Ages, whose long reign stretches from 1226 to his death in 1270. It is the period in which St Thomas raised philosophy to its highest level; it saw the fruits of the Albigensian Crusade, when much the greatest and most dangerous of all the heresies had threatened our civilization in the South of France. The destruction of that movement at the hands of the French northern nobility spread their influence right over the South. The greatest of the medieval Emperors, Frederick II, was defeated in the final struggle between his power and the Papacy in the middle of the same period; he began his reign a few years before that of St Louis and died in 1250.

Unfortunately England was disturbed during most of this time by latent or actual civil war. The son of John, Henry, had a long reign, almost entirely occupied by defence, or active

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struggle, against his great nobles. It was not till the return of his son, Edward I, from abroad in 1274 that England began tardily to enjoy the full fruits of the thirteenth-century spirit. But that reign of Edward I (1272-1307) brought belatedly to English society the same greatness which had already appeared in the other provinces of Christendom. The reign of Edward I may be regarded as the culminating point of the Middle Ages in England.

### HENRY III: THE MIDDLE AGES IN ENGLAND

**The English National Crown saved by the Pope. Hubert de Burgh.** When John died it seemed as though Prince Louis of France would become King of England, and so later inherit both kingdoms in one. The French-speaking nobles of England, who had summoned him, held the east and south, and, what was very important, the merchants and the wealth of London were on his side.

Then was seen the wisdom of John in having put himself directly under the protection of the Papacy. Pope Honorius II had sent his Legate Gualo to the support of the true heir, young Henry, a boy of ten; the Legate rallied the whole of the Church in England to the legitimate side; the Charter was reissued, *but with the dropping of the chief clause on which the rebels depended—the clause which demanded that the Crown should get no aid in times of stress save by consent of the barons.* The army which the Legate raised was marked with the crusading cross as a badge; it attacked the Prince of France and the nobility who were supporting him. They were besieging the castle of Lincoln, and in the streets of that town took place a scrimmage called the Fair of Lincoln (May 19, 1217) in which it got the mastery. At the same time the Justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, an old and faithful servant of John's, sent a fleet out into the Straits of Dover to destroy the French fleets (August 24, 1217). In early September Louis gave up the struggle, accepted a large sum of money, freed his prisoners, and went home.

The nine years between this date (1217) and the young King's entry into action were filled with nothing but the personal rule of Hubert de Burgh. But just at the close of them is a memorable day, 1225, when the King's tenants (not his subjects as a whole) granted him a new kind of tax; not a grant on land dues, as

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heretofore, but on *goods*: they agreed, as an exceptional gift, to give him the value of one-fifteenth of their movables. We shall see what effect this precedent had.

**The Plan to recover the Plantagenet Inheritance in France.** In 1223 Philip Augustus, who had so successfully overrun and captured John's inheritance in France, died. The English government claimed that his son Louis (the one who had tried to become King of England, and who now succeeded to the French throne) had given when he left England some sort of pledge to restore to the English Crown the Plantagenet provinces—Normandy and the rest—over which the King of France was supreme. The claim was pressed. Before anything could come of it the King of France (Louis VIII) died, in 1226, leaving as his successor yet another Louis (St Louis IX), who was as yet but a child in his eleventh year. The French nobles took advantage of the minority to rebel; but this opportunity for action on the part of the young King of England was thrown away. An army was assembled at Portsmouth, but the transport was insufficient, and the situation led to a quarrel between Hubert de Burgh and young Henry. There was thus no fighting as yet. Hubert de Burgh fell from power, but there followed a worse state of affairs for the monarchy than his administration had been, for the principal places began to be filled with nobles from the former French possessions. John's widow, Isabella, the mother of the King, had married the great Lusignan Baron of Poitou, and was urging the recovery of the lands which had been lost in the early years of her former marriage. The people who under her influence were given lucrative places in England were of exactly the same sort as the barons in England—that is, these were not the born subjects of Henry, though many of them the great barons whose main property was in England was that these were not the born subjects of Henry, though many of them had been the born subjects of Henry's father. There was no objection to a foreign-born baron holding an English fief hereditarily—the King of Scotland was in that position, and so was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester; the objection was the giving to nobles from Poitou and the French provinces of posts and endowments which the native-born nobles thought to be theirs of right.

**The Breakdown of Revenue. Papal Taxation.** The discontent was increased by the new Papal taxation of the

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Church and the other Papal exactions, which were due to the violence of the struggle between the Papacy and the Emperor, now reaching its climax. The Pope needed every penny he could get to maintain the Church against the assault of the Emperor Frederick, whose victory would have meant the destruction of the Church's power and the undermining of the Christian religion throughout Europe. Meanwhile it was clear that the foreign policy for recovering the lost Plantagenet dominions overseas would lead to grave fiscal strain in England, and this added to the ill-ease and half-mutinuous temper of the Barons.

**The Marriages. Taillebourg.** In 1236 the King, Henry III, being then still under thirty, but marrying late for a man of his position, took to wife Eleanor of Provence. He had already married his sister to the Emperor Frederick the year before: another counterbalance to the French power. And in 1238 Simon de Montfort, a baron, and born his subject, secretly married another sister, Eleanor. This marriage was to be of great effect. The De Montfort family was one of small nobles with a castle on the borders between Normandy and the Paris district. The King's alliance with Provence was a prelude to the recovery of the centre and west of France: the French monarchy had just got hold of Toulouse and the lands in between Provence and the old Plantagenet inheritance as a result of the Albigensian Crusade. As a result of this crusade the De Montfort family had risen to very great fortune, for the first Simon de Montfort (the father of the man who had now married the King of England's sister) had been the leader of it. This elder Simon had died in 1218. His second son, the younger Simon, inherited through his mother the earldom of Leicester and its revenues. He therefore lived at the English court, and it was there that he made secret love to and secretly married the sister of the King—a marriage which added greatly to his position, for he was now the brother-in-law not only of Henry III of England, but also of Frederick II, the Emperor.

Simon's marriage gave great scandal, for when a son was born to him the child was hailed by many as heir to the throne, because Henry as yet had no heir. Of course, Henry's own brother, Richard of Cornwall, would have inherited in any case; but the incident shows what a great, and at the same time treasonable, place Simon was beginning to occupy. When

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a few months later a son was born to Henry himself (the boy who was afterwards to be Edward I) there was a further quarrel, and Henry drove Simon out. Simon went off on crusade with the King's brother, Richard of Cornwall, and came back in time for the effort which was at last made for the recovery of the French provinces.

The Plantagenets had kept, in spite of John's losses, the very important town of Bordeaux and the country which lies between the middle Garonne and the Pyrenees and the Atlantic—which went under the general name of Gascony. Henry now made a bid to recover the provinces lying to the north of the Garonne and the south of the Loire, of which the most important was Poitou. St Louis had given the feudal revenues of Poitou to his brother: Henry, by way of affirming his claim, gave them (though, of course, unable to collect them) to his brother Alphonso. Henry's mother, the Queen-Dowager Isabella who had married the Lusignan, one of the greatest nobles in Poitou, made her husband refuse allegiance to St Louis and the Crown at Paris.

On May 9, 1242, Henry III set out with an army from Portsmouth, and landed in the Gironde. The English barons had refused him help, and he only had a very small force. He counted on the former subjects of the Plantagenet Crown rallying to him and on the forces he could raise in Gascony, which he still held. He marched north from the Gironde with about 20,000 men to meet the French, who were marching south against him from Chinon with much larger forces. The clash took place on Saturday, July 19, at the little town of Taillebourg. There was no decisive result, but Henry had to fall back, and ended as he had begun, with nothing but his original possessions south of the Garonne.

The effect of this defeat was to shake Henry's position badly at home, and the continuous demands of the Pope for money made things worse. The actual renunciation of the Plantagenet inheritance did not come for many years, and was filled with wearisome negotiations. When a settlement was at last arrived at (1259) Henry consented to abandon Normandy, Maine, Poitou, Anjou; and retained, under the suzerainty of the French King, Périgord, Gascony, and the Limousin. ✓ Two years after Taillebourg there was a first attempt on the part of the barons to control the King's revenue and to name the

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great officers of the Crown. In 1248 the Emperor's army was destroyed before Parma, and the Papacy was politically stronger than ever, as well as (what was much more important) victorious in the spiritual field, having settled the security of Christendom against the anti-Christian efforts of Frederick. In that same year (1248) the King sent his brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, to Gascony as governor.

**The Growth of Parliament.** In 1254 an important change took place in the feudal Council which surrounded the King. We have seen how many years before (in 1204 and 1213) King John had introduced the idea of representation by summoning gentry from each shire to discuss with him the possibility of raising exceptional funds for his desperate struggle with Philip Augustus. Now, in 1254, these local gentry, two knights from each shire, were summoned to come to the Council and decide what could be granted by their order and by the lesser freemen whom they represented. It was not thought at the time to be anything remarkable, and it is interesting to us only because it is a step in the gradual growth of what was later to be the full English Parliament. Representation, as we know, was an idea novel to England, though it had been familiar in the South of France and had been actively practised on both sides of the Pyrenees for more than a century, but it was spreading everywhere, for it was thoroughly in the spirit of the thirteenth century.

**The Feudal Rebellion led by Simon de Montfort.** Simon de Montfort had behaved with cruelty and tyranny in his government of Gascony; he had made it difficult to hold, and things became so bad that he was called home and tried by his peers. He was acquitted; but a lasting enmity was founded between him and his brother-in-law, the King. In this year, 1254, he opposed the granting of financial aid to Henry. The King wanted money on all sides. After the defeat of the Emperor by the Pope and his death the Kingdom of Sicily, which had belonged to Frederick, was offered by the Pope, and accepted by Henry, for his younger son. Meanwhile in the vacancy for the Empire Richard of Cornwall was proposed, and elected at Aix-la-Chapelle. It almost seemed as though the Plantagenet dynasty was to recover its predominant position in western Europe; but the barons in England refused to support the policy, and it was due to their antagonism, led

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by the King's brother-in-law Simon, that Henry III's great schemes of foreign policy broke down.

The first act of hostility in what was later to be called the Barons' Wars—that is, the rebellion of the feudal nobles led by Simon de Montfort against the King—took place on May 2, 1258. The fighting was to last, off and on, for seven years. On this date, May 2, 1258, the barons came to the Council fully armed, and the King felt himself to be a prisoner and yielded. Next month the great feudal Council met again at Oxford, with a full revolutionary programme, drawing up their claims in a document called the Provisions of Oxford. This put the crown in commission: it set up a committee of reform made up half of Henry's supporters and half of the rebels; the King and his heir, the young Prince Edward, swore to the provisions, and a clique of barons virtually took over the Government. The rebels quarrelled among themselves in the following year, 1259. By the spring of 1260 there was a strong popular reaction in favour of the King, and that reaction looked to the leadership of the young Prince Edward, who was now twenty-one and an excellent soldier. As against him, it was feared that Simon de Montfort would attempt to usurp the royal authority.

**The Mise of Amiens.** Early in 1261 King Henry, relying on the general loyal reaction of the moment throughout the country, began to stand up to the rebels. He took over the treasury, demanded a personal oath of the merchants of London, and was in a fair way to recover his full power. There was an attempt at reconciliation between him and his brother-in-law Simon, which failed through Simon's refusal, and on April 25, 1263, the main fighting began. The young heir to the great family of De Clare, who were Earls of Gloucester and masters of the Severn valley, had joined the rebels and refused homage to the King. The rebels ravaged the lands of those who would not join them, they captured western castles of the Severn district from the King's garrisons, and they mastered London. But before autumn Henry had a regular army at his disposal, raised mainly by the energy of his son, the young Prince Edward. The rebels doubted their chances, and were ready to negotiate; the Provisions of Oxford were dug up, with their proposal to get rid of the King's rule and substitute the rule of the nobles for it, and it was agreed that the conflict was to be

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submitted to the arbitration of the King of France, St Louis, the most respected public figure of the day. St Louis summoned the adverse parties to Amiens: Henry attended the court, Simon kept away.

On January 23, 1264, St Louis gave judgment in a form called the *Mise of Amiens*. It refused the claim of the rebels, supported the royal authority, and was confirmed by the Pope.

**The Battle of Lewes.** Simon de Montfort, seeing that the arbitration had gone against him, decided to break his oath and to renew the struggle. He was a great soldier and laid his plans excellently, sending one of his sons to oversee the defence of the West, and another to garrison and hold the castles which cut the roads from the north. The backing Simon had was not only baronial; there was the considerable popular support of the Franciscan Order conspicuous on the same side, for everywhere the fiscal demands of the Papacy and the Crown had caused disaffection. As is always the case in times of strain, those who sought relief tended to centre their hopes on a personality, and the strong personality of Simon dominated the situation. Simon became the hero of the feudal rebellion.

But the King and his son Prince Edward had an army ready by the spring of that same year, 1264. They captured Simon's son (also called Simon) at Northampton, and by taking that post opened the roads from the north. They came south and took Tonbridge Castle, marched to the Channel coast to rally the Cinque Ports, and by Monday, May 12, were in front of Lewes, after marching up the Vale of Glynde. Simon's main force, containing many popular, ill-trained elements, including the militia from London, lay upon the Downs to the west of the town. On Tuesday, May 13, 1264, there was a negotiation which came to nothing; on Wednesday, the 14th, the two armies fought on the open, sloping down just west of and above Lewes. Prince Edward charged upon the right (or north) with success, but when he returned from his charge he found that Simon's forces on the royal left (or south) had cooped up the King and Richard of Cornwall in Lewes Castle, and were masters of the field. The King and Prince Edward therefore gave way. Popular opinion was too strong to allow the monarchy to be openly superseded, but in practice the arrangement came to, known as the *Mise of Lewes*, made

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Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, the master of the kingdom for the moment.

**The Next Step in the Growth of Parliament. The Representation of the Towns.** Simon was most afraid, among his enemies, of young Prince Edward. He kept him a close prisoner in the castle of Dover. Richard of Cornwall, who had been crowned Emperor at Aix (but, not having been yet consecrated by the Pope, was known as the King of the Romans), he also kept a prisoner at a great distance, in Kenilworth Castle.

Simon governed in the King's name, signing public acts with a new Great Seal which he had had made in the likeness of the King's, but which was attached to documents without asking the King's leave. He went round to the counties to choose men from among the gentry who were in support of him, and summoned a feudal Council of those baronial rebels who also supported him, proposing to add to these his picked delegates from the shires.

So far Simon was only doing what had already been done more than once, in the transformation of the national council from a purely feudal gathering to what was to become the Parliament, but he now took a further step which was to prove later of much importance. He summoned this Great Council of his to meet in London in the following January; and he not only had his twenty-three great "Tenants in chief"—that is, the great barons who were on his side—he not only summoned the clergy as a matter of course, nor those two gentlemen from each county whom he had had chosen to support him, but also, like John, *two burgesses from a number of towns*, the list of which had been drawn up for the purpose. In future the Great Council would include not only representatives of the lesser gentry in the shire (two from each), but also two burgesses from each of a number of selected towns, including most of the important towns in the kingdom, and such others as Simon thought would support him. The whole experiment was only undertaken in support of a rebellious faction which happened to be in power at the moment, but it served as a valuable precedent, and caused the town populations, who on the Continent had long been sending representatives to similar councils, to have a voice in the Great Council of England.

**The Battle of Evesham.** The victory of Simon and his faction was not to last. To begin with, there was the usual

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quarrel between the leaders, after which young De Clare separated himself from Simon and set up the King's standard in the lower Severn valley. A truce was patched up, but young Edward, whom Simon had taken with him to Hereford (he dragged the King with him there as well), managed to escape. Simon, in his anxiety at this accident, committed a strategical blunder, for which that great soldier should not be blamed, for he had but a choice between two alternatives, with no power of judging which was the better. He knew that reinforcements for the royal cause had landed in Pembroke-shire; he thought that Prince Edward and Clare would therefore march westward; and on May 30, 1265, he ordered an assembly of the crown tenants to come armed to Worcester and Gloucester. He intended thus to concentrate on the Severn, and so cut off his enemies in Wales and prevent them from getting eastward into England. But Edward and De Clare had already marched eastward, not westward. They held Worcester and Gloucester, and it was really Simon who was cut off. Simon got together an ill-trained body of Welshmen, bribed by his abandonment, in Henry's name, of the rights of the King of England over Wales. Meanwhile Simon's son, coming up from the south-east coast to help his father, was caught at Kenilworth by a rapid march which young Edward undertook on August 1. On the same day Simon de Montfort himself, taking the captive King with him, a small body of four hundred armed knights and the irregular Welsh forces which he had hastily gathered, crossed the Severn, and on Sunday, August 3, encamped outside Evesham, to the north of the river Avon, in the horseshoe of land round which the stream runs. By sunrise of Monday, August 4, 1265, he saw forces on the high ground to the north. He thought at first they were those of his own son coming to help him from Kenilworth, but soon found that they were not allies, but enemies—the three columns of young Edward's army. They came down the hill, and in the action which followed Simon's hastily gathered force was annihilated. King Henry was set free, and the great rebel himself was killed.

**The End of the Reign.** There was left nothing but to clear up the remains of the rebellion. Kenilworth obstinately held out to the end of 1266; it only surrendered to starvation after half a year's siege. In the next year Llewelyn, the chief

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ruler in Wales, tendered his oath of fealty; by the November of 1267 a Parliament was held at Marlborough and a full peace was made, the Pope sending a Legate, who, in 1268, arranged generous terms which did much to pacify the remains of disaffection. Young Prince Edward went off on crusade, the charter of London was restored, Simon's son was pardoned, and the kingdom was again at peace. Two years later, while young Prince Edward was still abroad, Henry III died at Westminster on November 16, 1272.

### EDWARD I

**Greatness of the Reign.** There is a greatness about the reign of Edward I which is due in the main to his own character, for he was a man self-disciplined, with a clear policy which he tenaciously held throughout his life and a power of achievement which unfortunately was not inherited by his immediate successors. He devoted his life to one main object—the turning of the island of Britain into a united realm. He gave up the effort to recover the Plantagenet inheritance on the Continent, though he kept Gascony and Guienne in spite of efforts to deprive him of all that Garonne country. He had evidently decided that the effort to recover the country in the north would fail if it were attempted, and exhaust the resources of the kingdom. Therefore he determined to invest those resources and his own energy in the creating, if it were possible, of one British kingdom under one king. He very nearly succeeded: indeed, at the moment of his death an onlooker might have credited him with having achieved his end and made it permanent.

The reign is further remarkable for the final development of Parliament into a form which it was to keep for centuries, supplementary to the old feudal Council; it was now established, though only for grave moments, such as the beginning of a reign or consequent upon severe financial necessity. This new organ, the Parliament, to appear now and then side by side with the old Council, was made up of the great barons, including the higher clergy (the chief abbots and the bishops), a representative body of the mass of the clergy, a representative body of two knights from each shire, and two burgesses from each of the selected towns. These last were known, in the French

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of the day, as *li Communz*, of which we later made the modern word 'Commons.' There also took place under Edward that significant event, the breakdown of the Jewish financial power in England and the exile of the Jewish body—but only *after* it had lost its wealth.

### **The First Step in Unity: the Conquest of Wales.**

Edward returned home from the Crusades, and was crowned in the year 1274. He was then a tall, active man in his very prime—thirty-five years old. Simon's conflict, called the Barons' Wars, had exhausted the spirit of internal rebellion, he was secure within his own borders, and he could set about undertaking the first task in achieving the unity of the island—to impose his rule upon the Welsh people in their mountains.

He summoned the chief prince of North Wales, Llewelyn, to do fealty. Llewelyn did not refuse, but he made excuses, and did not, in fact, appear at the court, though his brother David, on account of a quarrel, joined the English. Edward marched against North Wales late in the fighting season of 1277; it was the middle of the summer before he got his feudal levies together in the country between the Severn and the Dee; thence he took the coast road down the Dee and along the northern shore, supporting the land forces with his fleet. By the winter he had all he wanted for the moment. He proposed to annex the eastern hundreds of Wales as far as Conway, to exact a tribute for Anglesey; he married Llewelyn to that rich heiress, Montfort's daughter—and, of course, did everything he could for David, his ally. But the success was only verbal; it was necessary to reconquer Wales. The mountains were not securely held.

Five years after this first easy campaign David suddenly betrayed his royal ally, seized Hawarden Castle, carried off the official whom Edward had left therein as local governor, and put the garrison to the sword. Meanwhile Llewelyn laid siege to Edward's border castles, and his mountaineers began ravaging the Marches. All this was in March 1282, in the week before Easter. Edward gathered another army and marched into Wales with the summer. He occupied the northern part of the country precariously, after a check at the Menai Straits, where his bridge of boats broke down. The accident which put everything into his hands was the death of Llewelyn. That prince had come down into Radnorshire; he was watching the

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movements of an English force on the far side of the Wye when he was surprised and killed and his head sent to the King. The Welsh chieftains began to capitulate one after another when the news reached them, at the very end of the year 1282, and by the midsummer of the next year, 1283, Edward was completely master. He put David to death as a traitor, established courts of justice in Wales on the English model, and built, in order to hold the country, those splendid castles which still remain as evidence of the greatness of the time—the greatest of all is at Carnarvon. By 1284 the province was feudally dependent upon the English Crown. It was not wholly incorporated into England; nor was its language, nor for the moment its tribal customs, lost; but Wales had ceased to be wholly independent.

**The Conquest of Scotland.** The subjection of Scotland, or rather the incorporation of Scotland into one feudal realm under Edward, was a task of quite another kind: it seemed easier than the taking over of Wales, because the wealthier part of Scotland, the Lowlands, and the capital, Edinburgh, were organized under a French-speaking nobility, just like England south of the border. The Highlands, speaking their Celtic tongue and maintaining their tribal customs, had already come to regard themselves as one nation with the Lowlands, and as the Lowlands held much the greater part of the wealth, and as the centre of government lay there, the similarity, or rather identity, between the two social conditions north and south of the border should have made Edward's task the easier.

On the other hand, Scotland had what Wales had not, and that was a unity of national feeling. It was this still somewhat obscure sense of nationhood which in the long-run was to defeat the efforts at unity. It has, of course, been exaggerated (like all the early beginnings of nationalism) by the intensely nationalistic spirit of modern times, but it already existed, and was the main force antagonistic to Edward's schemes. As we have seen, acknowledgment after acknowledgment had been made admitting the suzerainty of the English Crown, but there had been forged as yet no real tie.

Edward's opportunity for interfering in the northern kingdom and establishing his power over it in more than nominal form came in the year 1286. In the March of that year the King of

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Scotland, Alexander III, died of a fall from his horse. He was the last descendant in the regular and direct male line of the family which had made itself the royal head of the Scottish people. He left a baby granddaughter, Margaret, the daughter of his own daughter Margaret, who had married the King of Norway. This baby heiress, known as the Maid of Norway, was sent over as the acknowledged Queen of Scotland. Edward had at first planned to contract a promise of marriage between this child and his own son, and thus to unite the two crowns; but the little girl died of the voyage, and the Scottish succession lay open.

There were two main claimants to that succession, both of them inheriting through women and both of them only distantly cousin to the royal line. One was John Balliol, an English baron, who inherited through two women—his mother and his grandmother. His mother, Devorguila, was the daughter of Margaret, the eldest daughter of Prince David of Scotland, the brother of William the Lion. William the Lion, King of Scotland, had been the grandfather of Alexander III, just dead, so that Devorguila was the second cousin of Alexander III, and John Balliol only the third cousin of the little Maid of Norway. However, if female descent were allowed, he came next in succession, and by all the feudal rules of inheritance was the rightful heir.

The other candidate, Robert Bruce, was the son of David's younger daughter, Isabella.

These two claims were duly laid before Edward, whose feudal court decided (as it could only decide) for the rightful claim of John Balliol. The Pope, however, refused to interfere or to decide. This decision of Edward's court in favour of John Balliol was given on November 6, 1292. Edward then handed over to John Balliol the Scottish castles with their garrisons, and received his fealty, Balliol doing formal homage at Newcastle.

Edward thus left Scotland under an independent sovereign, with only the feudal bond between it and himself; but there is no doubt that Scottish national sentiment disapproved of Edward's interference even in this general fashion, and John Balliol himself yielded to that sentiment. In the third year after the settlement, in 1295, when Edward was entangled in a quarrel with the King of France, John Balliol allied himself

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with the French, promising to invade England if Edward attacked on the Continent. It was an open breach of faith, and John Balliol further refused to appear when he was summoned to Edward's court in the year 1296. War followed; the Scottish town of Berwick was taken by storm, sacked, and its garrison and many of its population killed. Balliol repudiated the feudal connection with Edward, and Edward, calling him *fol et felon*—that is, in English, "mad and dastard"—raised a very large army, which had everything its own way. It marched up by the eastern Lowland road along the sea, and went north as far as Elgin. John Balliol surrendered, admitted his crown of Scotland to be forfeit, and later left Britain. He was dead within twenty years.

But all this, which was strictly legal by feudal ideas, was of no effect upon Scottish feeling, which remained determined to refuse even the overlordship of the English Crown. A poor gentleman (whom his enemies called a brigand), William Wallace, started a guerrilla war; he gained an initial success in 1297 at the Bridge of Lundy, near Stirling, cutting off a great part of the forces under Edward's vicegerent, at a moment when Edward himself was occupied in a French war. But the King of England returned again with a very large force, nearly 90,000 men, and on July 22, 1298, completely defeated Wallace at Falkirk (though Wallace himself escaped).

Yet the fruits of victory were lacking, for Edward could not hold the North. In the next year the Scots laid siege to Stirling, which was the key to the whole country—for that strong point, a castle built upon a rock above the Forth, stands at a junction where all communications between the north and the south of Scotland must cross. Stirling fell, and the Scots thereupon took refuge in the policy which had served John so well nearly a hundred years before in his trouble with the rebellion in England—they appealed to the Pope and handed themselves over to the Papal power as their protector.

It was the moment when the Papacy was advancing its highest claims of supremacy in temporal affairs over Christian princes; the Pope who had gone farthest in these claims (which naturally followed upon the success of the Papacy against the Emperor a lifetime before), Boniface VIII, called upon Edward to submit his claim. Edward replied that the barons of England denied the Pope's right to interfere, and he

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pleaded that his rights over Scotland came from Brutus of Troy and King Arthur—to which the Scottish replied that *their* independence could be traced from as far back as Scota, a daughter of the Pharaohs of Egypt, who had established the original independence of their country. In yet another great effort Edward fully established himself upon Scottish soil, and by the beginning of 1304 all had surrendered to him save Wallace, against whom Edward committed the only act of his life which could be called unjust in strict feudal justice. Wallace was captured by surprise, brought to London, and hanged and quartered as a traitor in the summer of the next year, 1305. Edward could plead that the guerrilla warfare started against him was irregular—Napoleon's plea against the Tyrolean leader Hofer—but in morals his action was indefensible, for Wallace was a true national leader.

Meanwhile the grandson of the claimant Bruce, now a young man of twenty-four, took up the leadership of Scottish resistance. He was a Norman noble like any other, but the possession of a crown and its revenues was worth attempting. Bruce had committed a murder, and Edward claimed the right of trying him as his King, in the year 1306. But before he had assembled an army to enforce that right Bruce had had himself crowned King of Scotland at Scone, in the March of that year. Once again Edward overran Scotland at will, driving the Bruce before him in flight overseas to Ireland. He returned as a hunted man in the next year, but had to fly again, until the whole of this long dispute was, for the moment, closed by Edward's death.

But Edward died, be it noted, convinced not only of his right to be supreme over Scotland, but of his success in achieving that position permanently. He might think as he died that he had reached the political goal of all his efforts—a united island of Britain under one head.

**The French Entanglement.** I have said that Edward did not pursue the effort to recover the Plantagenet inheritance on the Continent. Even as early as 1294 he was ready to yield to extreme demands on the part of the French King; but he was determined to retain the land which had always been held south of the Garonne. He made two efforts at an expedition in 1295: the first he abandoned to meet the rising of the Welsh, the second to meet the rebellion of Balliol. Having failed to

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lead an army against the French King, he might have lost the remaining possessions south of the Garonne had not the rising quarrel between Boniface VIII and the French King saved him. In that quarrel the royal house of Paris was victorious; it laid hands on the Papacy, and soon after brought it into a sort of captivity upon French soil—or, rather, upon soil surrounded everywhere by the French King's officers and authority—to the town of Avignon, where it remained for seventy years, the office of Pope being filled by one Frenchman after another all that time.

Edward thus ended his reign at peace with France, and married his son, young Edward, later to be Edward II (an unsatisfactory, ill-balanced lad who filled the last years of his father's lifetime with anxiety), to Isabella, the daughter of the Capetian house.

**The Expulsion of the Jews.** The episode of the Jewish repression and expulsion, which has already been mentioned, is of such moment that it must be treated separately, though it comes later in the reign than the Scottish campaigns and the formation of the first full Parliament (the date of which is 1295).

The fate of the Jews, it is significant to notice, was due to their impoverishment. They had from the Conquest onward, and possibly from before the Conquest, been the only financiers in Britain. They held a privileged position, dependent wholly upon the King, under whose licence alone they could lend money at usury. They were "the King's Jews," and this monopoly of protection had not only vastly enriched them, but made it necessary to go to them for any considerable financial operation. Jewish historians have justly boasted that the early castles and great ecclesiastical buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were "built with Jewish money"—in the sense that it was to the Jews that the Christian authorities had to go for liquid capital. In theory the money obtained by usury could be confiscated at death, but in practice the great bulk of it remained to those who enjoyed this privilege; the succession could be modified or large parts of it hidden; but there were exceptional cases in which, presumably because the moneylender (or banker, as we should now call him) had not taken his precautions in time, but had been surprised by death, a vast sum would fall into the treasury. Anyhow, the point to notice is that a comparatively small body of Jews,

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less than a score of thousand families, confined to fixed areas in certain towns, were the great financial agency of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, just as they were in England and modern Europe during the early and middle nineteenth century.

What undermined their position was the attempt to enrich themselves yet further by using the opportunity of the Crusades. They lent money upon the title-deeds of land, and though in legal theory they might not enter into feudal ownership, they could use the bonds as they willed. The noble class, and many others below them, had needed money for those great Eastern expeditions; they had pawned the land which was their livelihood, the common people were also bound in such security as they had, and, with the rates of interest charged, the situation at last became intolerable.

The Jews were still protected by the Government, but fierce outbreaks took place against them in the early thirteenth century, the antagonism in England being especially violent, though it could be matched by similar outbreaks upon the Rhine. It became difficult for them to recover the moneys they had lent—usury having worked its own ruin, as it always does in the long-run—and with the accession of Edward I the consummation of that ruin began. For there came a royal ordinance forbidding the recovery of money lent upon manorial land—a man could have back his manors by paying the principal alone. Further, the Jew might not continue to hold the bond if that bond were upon land; he had to get rid of it as best he might, but he could not continue keeping it.

The next step was to destroy the old Jewish monopoly in usury. The Jews were no longer to be protected as money-lenders, though in compensation they were allowed to enter any trade they chose and even take leases of land for not more than ten years, and they could buy and sell in the markets like anyone else. But the freedom thus granted was of little use, for the small Jewish community—now more and more impoverished—was set apart and hated. In 1279 there was a violent attack upon them on the accusation of having debased the currency, and three hundred men and women were put to death. Others besides the Jews suffered, but the Jews were the principal victims.

A strange effort was made to settle the deadlock by conversion. It did not succeed; the Jews were steadfast to their

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tradition, and in 1287 the end came. A fine was laid upon them, legal enough but excessive, amounting to something like a third of a million pounds of our money. They were already vastly reduced in wealth, and the burden crippled them. Within three years the whole ruined community was exiled, the sailors who had the carrying of them abroad plundered them—and in some cases murdered them. The criminals were punished, but popular anger was only the more aroused, and the King, by this last measure of exile, drew upon himself the praise and congratulations of all his people. The clergy and the laity combined to vote him great sums in compensation for what he had lost by revoking the Jewish monopoly. So ended the "King's licence." A certain number remained in the island as crypto-Jews, but no formally admitted Jewish community was present in England until long after the Reformation, until England was completely Protestant—that is, for nearly four hundred years after Edward's day.

**Death of Edward I.** In the midsummer of 1307, as he was preparing to march northward against the scattered bands of Bruce, Edward had concentrated his army at Carlisle. Its first units had already gone forward when the King's weakness, which was increasing and almost prevented his sitting his horse, told him that he was doomed. He advanced a few miles, and then submitted to death, passing on Friday, July 7 of that year (1307). "Edward, King of England, passed outward from this our light, and may his soul be gathered into Paradise"—those were the words in which contemporaries recorded their mourning for the greatest of the English kings.

## THE END OF THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES:

### EDWARD II

**The Danger of Decline.** After any great period of energy and success there must be some reaction, and it was clear at the beginning of the fourteenth century that the glory inherited from the thirteenth would decline. But the process need not have been continuous. There was no reason why the old high civilization of the Middle Ages, which reached its summit in England under Edward I and which was so splendid throughout Europe, should not have maintained a level course for centuries to come, had it not been for the sudden and

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appalling catastrophe of the Black Death, in the middle of that hundred years.

This quite exceptional plague, which reached England in 1348, marked a turning-point in the history of Europe. Thenceforward everything changes, but in the first half of the century, although there was reaction from the simplicity and grandeur of an earlier time, and although a disastrous war had already begun between the French-speaking Kings of England and France—the Plantagenet and Valois houses—there was no breakdown. The Papacy was somewhat weakened by its transference to Avignon, and a line of French Popes tended to limit its international value; but the Papacy in the past had suffered similarly from local and partial influences: it had been captured by the Emperors working from Germany, earlier by noble families in Rome, and the “Babylonian captivity” of Avignon (as it came to be called) had nothing fatal about it; it would have been remedied in time like the rest save for the Black Death.

Architecture and armament became more complicated, and ceremonial forms more elaborate after 1300; there was some theatrical taint appearing in what had been simple and straightforward in public life, but the Middle Ages were still nourished after 1300 as before by the same spirit; the rules of society by which were established the co-operative village system and the democratic forms of town government, the feudal relations of the nobility, were still vigorous and healthy.

**Character of Edward II. Pierre de Gaveston (Gaveston).** In England there was an exceptionally bad period after Edward I's death in 1307, because the central government was weakened, the character of the new King was insufficient, and further suffered from the virulent hostility of his wife, Isabella of France.

Edward II when he came to the throne was a young man of twenty-three. The disasters of his reign—his personal disasters, for the nation as a whole did not suffer heavily—were certainly due to defects in his character; but he was the object of such hatred that these have been exaggerated. He was courageous, a good fighter, fond of sport, amiable, a first-rate horseman, good-looking, and fairly strong; but he lacked just those qualities necessary for government. It is not certain that he was vicious, though his wife and his other enemies

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gave it to be understood that he was; but he did lean too much on favourites, one of whom was his especial friend and particularly obnoxious to his fellow French-speaking nobles in England. This favourite was a certain Pierre de Gabaston, the son of a squire in Gascony, taking his name and title from a village on the little river Gabas, north-east of Pau. This young man (whose name has been corrupted to Piers Gaveston) was just of a sort that should have mixed easily with the nobles of the court, who were exactly of his own kind, talking the tongue he talked and being of the same social habits and manner; for all over the West, from the Grampians to the Mohammedan districts of Spain, the governing class of that time was still of the same kind: the French culture, moreover, covered by this time much more in England than the squire's class and the nobles; it was extending throughout all educated society. But Gabaston was, as a fact, intensely and increasingly unpopular: he occupied too much of the King's attention, the nobles were jealous of him, and he replied with an insulting wit which made them angrier still. Nearly the whole of the first five years of the reign, from the summer of 1307 to the summer of 1312, are filled with the growing protest against Gabaston's influence.

Six months after his father's death young Edward went over to France to do homage for the remaining Plantagenet fiefs in the South and for the dowry of his future wife, the daughter of the King of France, to whom he had affianced himself. At the same time he married this daughter, by name Isabella, a girl of sixteen—beautiful, imperious, and, as her character developed, abominable. She was vindictive, cruel, unscrupulous, and completely careless of her honour. And she, more even than the weakness of Edward himself, explains what followed.

During his absence the King had been foolish enough to leave Gabaston Regent of the kingdom—a thing intolerable to the great nobles—and at his coronation, which followed immediately on his return, Gabaston carried the crown—a further outrage. The feeling grew so strong that Edward was forced to send Gabaston away for a time, and the financial necessities of the court gave the nobles a further advantage, for the King allowed a committee of great feudal magnates, under the title of 'ordainers,' to control the expenditure of the money just granted him in aid. Gabaston came back, the tension increased,

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and it was made all the worse because, four years after Edward's marriage, there was still no heir. In such a situation it was inevitable that some one should put himself at the head of the rebellious temper abroad—and the obvious leader was a Plantagenet who might conceivably supplant the King. This candidate was Thomas, Earl of Lancaster.

**The Beginning of the Lancastrian Opposition.** Edward I had had a younger brother, Edmund, nicknamed Crouchback, whom he made Earl of Lancaster. This Edmund had a son Thomas, who was thus first cousin to Edward II. This Thomas had great masses of feudal revenue—no less than five earldoms (governorships of counties), three of them in a clot—Lincoln, Derby, and Leicester.

To reinforce the power of such a man, the head after Edward himself of the Plantagenet family and of such vast wealth, a rumour was spread that Edmund Crouchback had really been elder brother to Edward I, and had only been rejected on account of his deformity. In the spring of 1312 Lancaster marched on York, with the object of taking the King. He missed Edward, who raised his standard for war, while Gabaston, the favourite, was in Scarborough Castle. Gabaston was taken, and, in spite of the formal conditions of his surrender, murdered in Lancaster's own presence at Warwick—or, rather, on a height, some way north of the town on the Kenilworth road, called Blacklow Hill. This was a heavy blow to the prestige of the King; but as the year went on there seemed to be some chance of recovery, for the Papal Legate interfered as a negotiator, and at long last an heir was born to Edward, on November 13, 1312, at Windsor. This was the child who was to grow up to be Edward III, and who from the place of his birth was called Edward of Windsor. A treaty was patched up between the King and the rebels, and by 1313 it looked as though the reign might, now that an heir was born, be stable after all.

What undid the whole business was the final loss of Scotland; for it is an invariable rule in the history of medieval kingship that military disasters in foreign war are followed by a movement for undoing the king at home.

**The Loss of Scotland.** The main castles of Scotland were still garrisoned by those whom Edward I had sent up there. The King of England was still the master of the country in

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this fashion, but there was a King of Scots all the same; the Scottish people supported the Bruce as the head of their nation, and the Bruce began to reduce the castles one by one to his obedience. He got Linlithgow and Perth and Roxburgh, and at last, in 1313, the castle of Edinburgh itself. The faction which supported the English Crown in Scotland became frightened and divided. Stirling, the key-point, still held out, but it was at the last gasp and had promised to surrender by St John's Day, the Midsummer Feast, June 24, 1313, if it was not previously relieved. Edward showed great energy at this moment, though his nobles were still too rebellious to help him as they should have done and though he was not properly backed up financially—even the clergy being reluctant to vote aid. He managed to get an army together which was ready to march by June 18 from Berwick.

There were now only six days left before that on which Stirling had promised to surrender. It is difficult to say how many men Edward had with him, perhaps a total muster of 20,000; but his force was of poor material, and especially lacking in that element of heavily armed, trained mounted gentry which made all the difference to medieval battles. However, it marched well, covering fifteen miles a day, and arrived before Stirling on the eve of the fatal day—that is, on June 23. The Bruce may have had a somewhat larger force, but at any rate it was united and devoted to his cause, and in the struggle that followed on the morrow (St John's Day, June 24, 1313) along the brook of Bannockburn the Bruce was completely victorious. Edward had fought well personally, but his army had gone to pieces, and he had to fall back upon Dunbar. The day of Bannockburn is the capital day in the history of the relations between England and Scotland. Henceforward, although the English Crown continues its old claim, and often refuses to the Bruce the title of King, there is in fact an independent Scottish kingdom, and the unity of the island under one head was never afterwards achieved by conquest. Scotland remained the enemy of England and the ally of the French, until all was transformed in both countries by the Reformation, two and a half centuries later.

**The New Favourites.** Gabaston being dead, the King took for a new favourite the younger Despenser, son of a great family in the West of England and enriched by his marriage

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to the daughter of the Earl of Gloucester. Lancaster again took arms, and by 1321 had driven the new favourite and his father out of the country, but Edward had the good fortune to capture Lancaster in the next year, 1322; he had him tried by his peers and put to death at Pontefract—the worst of the treason with which he was charged being that he had conspired with the Scottish enemies of the English Crown.

**Mortimer and Isabella.** Among the powerful nobles of the West was one Roger de Mortemer (Mortimer), a Lord of the Marches of Wales, who held the castle of Wigmore, and was a rival to and enemy of the Despensers.<sup>1</sup> This man had become the lover of the Queen, Isabella, who now hated the King. The younger Edward, the heir, now in his fourteenth year, had been sent over to France to pay his allegiance to the French King as suzerain of the Plantagenet provinces in the south. Edward had imprisoned Mortimer, but when the Queen had gone over to France herself in 1325, to the court of her brother, the King, at Paris, Mortimer got away and joined her. In the autumn of the next year, 1326, Isabella came back, as her husband had entreated her to do; but she came back in open rebellion—she landed at Orwell, in Suffolk, which was then a great port, and brought her lover with her. The rebel nobles supported her, and among others—what was very important—the Plantagenet of the younger branch, Thomas of Brotherton, who was Earl of Norfolk and Earl-Marshal—that is, the titular head of the fighting forces of England.

**The Earl-Marshal and the Title of Norfolk.** It is here necessary to digress a moment, as we approach the origins of a family which is going to play a great part in English history, counting for generations as a sort of half-royalty: the Howards.

Edward I had married twice. His first wife was Eleanor of Castile, by whom he had Edward II: his second wife was a princess of France, Margaret by name, by whom he had a son, Thomas, born at Brotherton, and therefore called Thomas of Brotherton. Thomas was thus half-brother to Edward II. Him his father made Earl of Norfolk and Earl-Marshal: that is, official commander of the armed forces in time of war. He it was now, in 1326, a young man twenty-six years of age,

<sup>1</sup> The Mortimers did not take their name from the Dead Sea, in Palestine, in the Crusades, but from a stagnant pond in east Normandy. They held the Welsh Marches soon after the Conquest.

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who most disloyally and ungratefully backed up the rebellion of Queen Isabella. This Thomas of Brotherton, a Plantagenet, Earl-Marshal, and Earl of Norfolk, left no heir; but he left a daughter and heiress called Margaret, who married a Segrave. She in her turn left no male heir, but had a daughter and heiress, Elizabeth, who married a Mowbray. *Her* son and heir, Thomas Mowbray, was made Duke of Norfolk, and died at the end of the century, in 1399. Thomas Mowbray left two children, Margaret and Thomas. Thomas, the heir to the title and to the Earl-Marshaldom, left a line which ended in an heiress, Anne. When she died the royal line of Thomas of Brotherton, the Earl-Marshaldom, and the title of Norfolk jumped to the descendants of Margaret. Margaret had married into a wealthy legal family, her husband being a certain Robert Howard, and she had by him a son and heir, John Howard. When Anne Mowbray, the heiress of the Brotherton line, died in 1483, this John Howard, her cousin, succeeded, and was made Duke of Norfolk and Earl-Marshal in his turn. From him all the branches of the Howards descend, the head of the family bearing (save when it suffered from attainder) what was then the half-royal<sup>1</sup> title of *Duke* (Duke of Norfolk) and the hereditary right to be Earl-Marshal of England.

All this should be borne in mind, for it explains the position of the Howards throughout English history, and especially the critical effect of their blood in the sixteenth century.

We must now return to the main story of Edward II and the death of the King.

**End of the Reign and Death of Edward II.** Queen Isabella and her lover, Mortimer, had thus completely succeeded. The King could not find sufficient support; he fled from London, where he was living in the Tower, and went to the West with the Despensers, father and son. He tried to escape by sea and failed; the elder Despenser was caught at Bristol

<sup>1</sup> The title of Duke in England always connoted in the Middle Ages a connection with the blood royal, Plantagenet. There is only one exception, the favourite of Richard II, and it was thought an extravagance in the King to name him so. Even under the Tudors this rule held till the Reformation, though Suffolk was made a Duke before becoming brother-in-law to Henry VIII. After the break-up of medieval rules in the sixteenth century more than one man not connected with royalty held the title—*e.g.*, Warwick under Edward VI, and later Buckingham under James I. After the monarchy had fallen in the seventeenth century the governing class gave the title of Duke to many of their wealthiest members.

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and put to death; the King was captured in South Wales, and the younger Despenser, caught just afterwards, was also murdered. The young Prince Edward, the heir, was proclaimed guardian of England, and through the last months of 1326 Edward II was kept a prisoner at Kenilworth. Very early in the next year, 1327, an effort was made to procure the resignation of the King, but he would not resign, and Isabella and her lover were not fully supported in so extreme an effort.

But they got their way. What happened to the imprisoned King we do not know; it is probable that he continued to refuse to resign, but it was proclaimed by the heralds that he had voluntarily surrendered the throne. He was taken about from one prison place to another, from castle to castle, to Corfe, to Bristol, and at last to Berkeley, in the Marches of Wales. There, on or about September 21, 1327, he was almost certainly murdered. The body was publicly shown, the face badly distorted in agony. The method of his death was never known, but popular rumour had it that he had been murdered by the thrusting of a red-hot iron into his bowels.

Thenceforward the boy Edward, his son, was the nominal ruler, but the real power for another three years still lay in the hands of the abominable Isabella and her paramour.

### EDWARD III (FIRST HALF)

**The Minority.** Isabella made her lover, Mortimer, Earl of March. (He was destined to found a family which later on married into the Plantagenets, and we shall find one of his remote descendants legitimate heir to the crown of England.)

As might be expected, the irregular power of Isabella and her lover sacrificed the interests of the country. The claim to Scotland was abandoned against the payment of a sum of money, and young Edward was made to sign his renunciation of that claim. Mortimer, in his effort to secure himself, not only abandoned Scotland, but put to death Edward's brother, the Earl of Kent (the uncle of the boy nominally reigning)—but that was the last of his enormities.

**Young Edward III imposes himself.** By 1330 young Edward was eighteen, and legally of age to reign. He was already married to a Princess of Flanders, Philippa of Hainault, and already had a son by her who was later to be the Black

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Prince. In the autumn of the year he found support during the Council which was being held at Nottingham and seized the castle of the town; before the end of the year Mortimer had been hanged and quartered as a common traitor at Tyburn, Through the Pope's intercession the Queen was spared. She had still nearly thirty years to live, but her son kept her confined to one manor. He paid her visits with some pomp, but she had no further effect upon the life of England. She never regained her freedom.

**The Attempt to recover Scotland.** For seven years, until he was twenty-five, young Edward III did all he could to restore the old status of the English Crown in Scotland. It was a difficult task. He had to act indirectly, because there had been a solemn treaty and abandonment of the supremacy, as we have seen. But when, in 1332, John Balliol, the son of that Balliol who had been supported by, and had betrayed, Edward I, tried to get hold of the Scottish crown, and actually had himself crowned for the moment, Edward III intrigued with him. A border foray in the next year, March 1333, was taken as a pretext by Edward for besieging Berwick, and Balliol was given command of the siege. Edward came up and won a victory at Halidon Hill; the young King of Scotland, Bruce, was sent overseas by his wife (who was Edward's sister), and Balliol was set on the throne again in 1334. He behaved subserviently to the English King, even handing over the south-east of the country to the English Crown; and perhaps if Edward III had concentrated on the Scottish policy he might have recovered his grandfather's position as suzerain. But it happened to be just the moment when a much greater thing distracted his attention—an unexpected opportunity offered him to become King of France and England combined; to realize that Anglo-French realm which ever since the Conquest, and especially since the coming of the Plantagenets, had floated in the public mind of Western Europe as a permanent possibility.

**Edward III's Claim to the French Throne.** The French kings had come down in direct descent from father to son for three centuries and a half, from Hugh Capet, the first of the line to be crowned (987). The family had been of half-royal position long before that, and went back to the great Dukes of Francia (the country round Paris), rulers of the Loire

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country also in the lifetime after Charlemagne (850-900). There had never been any trouble with the succession since Hugh Capet had been crowned, not only because the male descent was thus continuous, but because there had been long reigns, and each King had survived long enough to see his eldest son and heir crowned before he died. But now suddenly, in 1328, this situation came to an end.

The last of the long line of regular, uninterrupted succession from father to son was Philip the IV (called Philippe le Bel—that is, the Handsome), the grandson of St Louis. Philip IV had a brother, to whom were given the title and lands of Valois; Philip also had three sons and a daughter who concern us. The three sons were Louis X, who died in 1316, leaving no son, but a daughter who was married to the King of Navarre; Philip V, the second son, who also left no heir; and Charles IV, the third son, who died in 1328. Now, Charles IV, like his two brothers, left no heir when he died, but his wife was with child, and the child was due to be born about three months after the father's death. The cousin of the dead man, Philip of Valois (the son of the old King's brother), to whom the title and revenues of Valois had been given, was—as being nearest male relative—made Regent pending the birth of the child.

Now, when that child should be born, if it were a son he obviously would be the heir to the kingdom. But as a fact when the child was born it was a girl.

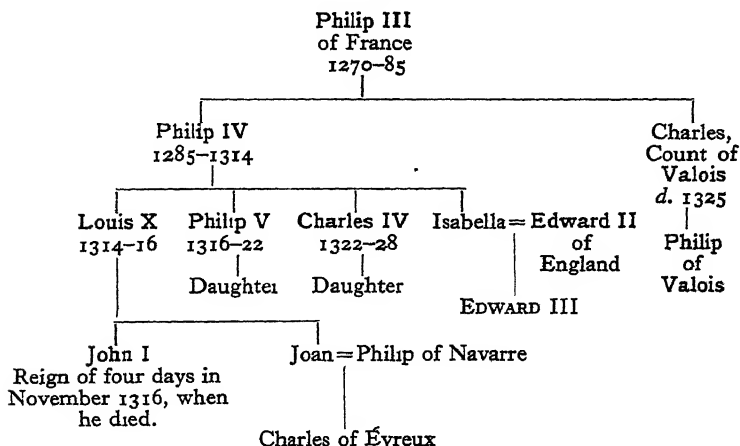
By all the regular rules of succession the Queen of Navarre would, on the death of Charles IV, have inherited the kingdom of France, for she was the heiress of the elder of the three brothers, none of whom had a male heir. But there were two very strong feelings in the spirit of the time making against such a settlement. One was the idea that France must have a king, a man, at its head, and not a woman—a feeling that was still very strong. Second, and more powerful, was the attachment of the French people to the Capetian house and name, which name, of course, could only descend to males. The sister of the dead King and of his two brothers had been that Isabella of France who had so shamefully betrayed and helped to murder her consort, Edward II of England. She was the mother of Edward III, and the moment Charles IV was dead Edward at once put in his claim to the French throne.

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sending Ambassadors to affirm it. But Philip of Valois, the Regent, cousin of the late King, had himself crowned with the support of the nation and of the Church in France behind him, because he was the eldest male Capetian, and that was

### EDWARD III'S CLAIM TO FRANCE

*A claim to inherit THROUGH a woman, though a woman could not herself inherit the French throne*



Philip of Valois claims as the only male in direct male descent, pleading a newly resurrected "Salic Law" governing the succession to the French crown, whereby it cannot be inherited either *by* or *through* a woman. Edward III claims on the common ground in European succession that one can inherit through a woman, though he admits a woman cannot inherit a throne. He claims through his mother, Isabella. Charles of Évreux, the grandson of Isabella's elder brother, King Louis X, is alive and has the better right, but is passed over because Charles's mother, Queen of Navarre, married far off and out of the kingdom.

the point upon which opinion insisted: the French insisted on being ruled by a *man*, and that man a *Capetian* in male descent.

It must be remembered, however, that Edward's claim to the crown of France was very strong. The idea that a woman ought not to rule was widely spread, but *the idea that the title to a ruling position could be inherited through a woman was universal*. The first conception made it impossible for the Queen of Navarre to mount the French throne; moreover, she was forgotten and far

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away (there was really no question of her); but if one could inherit through one's mother, as property is inherited, then Edward Plantagenet, Edward III of England, was the male nearest to the French throne. For Edward was the nephew of the last French King, whereas Philip of Valois, who had just had himself crowned, was only the first cousin.

In strict legal succession, as the rules of the day affirmed it, Philip of Valois could not be King. In order to confirm his seizure of the crown his legal men invented a pretext. They dug up a Latin document, hundreds of years old, which defined the customs of the Salian Franks, a small body of troops in the Roman army who had a set of rules of their own more than eight centuries before the present dispute had arisen. The Roman general commanding this body of auxiliary troops in the Roman army was their chieftain, Clovis, who had become before he died the practical ruler of the Gallic provinces of the Roman Empire. Because Clovis had been chieftain of the Franks there arose in the course of centuries the idea that he was King of France, and therefore the ruler of succession in that little body of Roman troops all those centuries ago was quoted as a precedent for succession to the French throne in 1328. This document, giving the Frankish rule of succession to *property*, which was now called the Salic Law, allowed land to descend only to the male members of a family, excluding descent through women, the women of this half-barbaric tribe on the Rhine frontier of the Empire being merged into the family with which they married—a rule present in many primitive communities. The French legists impudently put forward this document as a sufficient ground for saying that the French crown, which was only connected by name with the old Frankish Roman soldiers, could be inherited neither by a woman nor through a woman.

**Edward III moves to make good his Claim.** Although Edward, King of England, had brought forward his strong claim to the French throne—an immense prize if it could be gained, and the foundation of a new great empire in the West of Europe—he took no active steps to enforce his rights for nine years after the crowning of Philip of Valois. Indeed, in the fourth of those years, in 1331, just after he had affirmed his power, young Edward had given his allegiance to Philip of Valois, which was outwardly at least an admission of the latter's kingship. But the claim was never dropped, and a reason for pushing it was

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afforded when King Philip of France, in helping the Count of Flanders against a rebellion, made himself powerful in the Netherlands. The English export of wool to the Netherlands, where it was made up into cloth, was an important item of trade; it was to the interest of the English Crown to support the independence of the Flemish cities, and through Philip's new preponderance in the Netherlands the tendency to active war increased. But the actual outbreak turned upon the case of Robert of Artois.

Robert of Artois descended, through younger sons, from the kings of France; he was therefore a Capetian of the blood royal. There was a dispute as to his succession, which, by one theory of the local law, passed to his cousin, Philip of Valois' wife. This King of France seized his land, and Artois came over to get the help of Edward, and to stir up his ambition. Edward began to make alliances, first with the Emperor—the natural German enemy of the French monarchy—next with certain other German princes, and with the diocese of Cologne, and, of course, with the Flemish merchant towns, who heartily desired Edward's support against their feudal superiors, who taxed them, and against the power of the French King, who supported their feudal superiors. Ghent and Ypres and Brussels and the rest were trading and manufacturing cities, Flemish-speaking, and eager for a champion to deliver them from paying taxes to the French-speaking nobles who were their lords by inheritance.

**The Opening of the War.** Edward felt himself strong enough to act, now that he had the support of all these forces, and especially the great wealth and armed strength of the Netherland towns. These bought English wool in great quantities for their textile manufacture, and the trade link between them and London was also strong. Edward also had, as against the King of France, a strong economic weapon. With his loans and Parliamentary grants he could hire and train a well-disciplined mercenary army, whereas the King of France could not do so. The reason of this was that the King of France, though feudal superior of a much larger area than the King of England, with a much larger population, was *only* feudal superior of it. He could not get grants in money directly from the whole territory, nor forces in men; he had to work through the medium of his great vassals, heads of provinces. The kingdom of England, not being divided into provinces with

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semi-independent feudal rulers, was more compact and centralized, and could put larger sums of ready money into the hands of its ruler, the King, in times of crisis.

**The First Hostile Act of the Hundred Years War.** In October 1337 Edward had sent a letter to the Pope styling Philip the "so-called" King of France. He followed this up on All Saints' Day, November 1, by formally repudiating his allegiance to Philip, and we may date from that day the opening of the Hundred Years War.

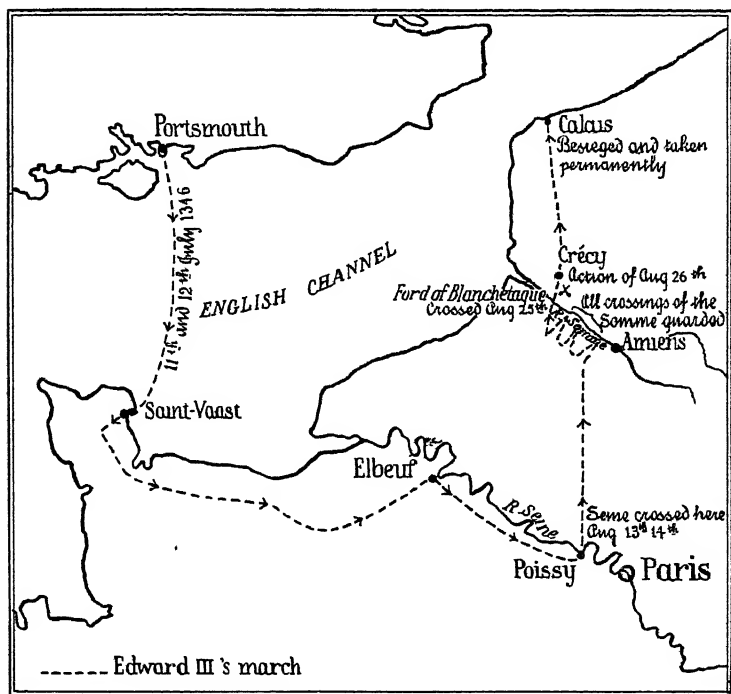
The term 'Hundred Years War' is misleading, for, though the final hostilities in which the last garrisons of the King of England were driven from northern French soil (save at Calais) did not take place until more than a hundred years had passed, there was nothing like a hundred years of continuous warfare. There were only two main campaigns; one at the beginning of the affair, at first a success for the Plantagenet, but followed by the recovery of the French monarchy and its land; another, almost a lifetime later, when brilliant success by the English Plantagenet King of the day—Henry V—was followed shortly after by yet another recovery of his lands by the King of France. But it is true that during all this time, more than a hundred years, there was a succession of hostile acts. Misery and impoverishment follow on raids and enemy marches through French territory, so that the wars between the Plantagenet and the Valois played their part in the breakdown of medieval civilization—though that part was nothing like so important as the crushing blow of the Black Death.

The policy of war in France was popular in England, especially in the wool districts and in the eastern towns, which were closely in touch with the Flemish cities. Edward sailed from the Orwell for Antwerp on July 16, 1338, but his allies lagged, and by the autumn of the next year he was back in England, having effected nothing. In the next year again, 1340, Edward, having now quartered the arms of France, won a great naval victory during the summer at what was then the large harbour of Sluys. It assured his communications for further raids across the Channel, but was of no decisive effect. Fighting round Tournai in 1341 and in Brittany in the two succeeding years came to nothing; but in 1346 a new complexion was given to the war by an unexpected and considerable victory at Crécy. /

**The Campaign and Battle of Crécy.** This victory was

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obtained in the following manner. Edward had collected an excellent force of well over 20,000 men, and was preparing to sail from Portsmouth to defend the old Plantagenet inheritance in the South of France—Gascony and Bordeaux and the Garonne, which were still directly ruled by the Plantagenets.



### CAMPAIGN OF CR CY

Edward III lands at Saint-Vaast, in Normandy, raids the Seine valley, crosses the Seine at Poissy, makes for the Strait of Dover, but finds all crossings of the Somme guarded. He gets across at Blanchetaque. At Cr cy he is caught by a French army, which he defeats. He proceeds after his victory to Calais, and takes it.

Thither would he sail—at least, he gave out that such was his intention. But as a fact, whether because he had changed his plans at sea or because what he had said about Gascony was only a ruse, he landed in Normandy on July 12 of that year (1346), on the point of the Cotentin peninsula.

Edward's force, though good and compact (it contained some primitive artillery which was of no great effect), could not hope

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to compare in numbers with the very large feudal levies of the French King when they should have been gathered. The object was rather to conduct a raid for the purpose of gain and of weakening his opponent. Edward looted the Norman towns, notably Caen, marched up the Seine almost to Paris, though there could be no question of his attacking that great town, and then (for the French feudal levies had by this time been gathered) he crossed the Seine at Poissy and doubled back by rapid marches towards the north-east, intending to meet his fleet in the Narrows of the Channel and get back to England again with his booty.

He was checked by the line of the Somme—a marshy valley only to be crossed by causeways or, lower down, by fords. He found all the crossings guarded, and went farther and farther down the stream, seeking his opportunity to reach the northern bank. This opportunity came on August 25, 1346, at the lowest passage of the river (a ford called Blanchetaque); but the attempt to cross there could only be taken at some risk. The French force guarding the farther bank where the hardened road of the ford came out on the northern shore of the Somme was small enough to be tackled by Edward's considerable army; but that army would have to get across quickly at low tide, for a little after, upon the flood, the water would already be more than waist-deep.<sup>1</sup> Edward's army got across, and successfully fought its way past the French posts on the far side, but it was a very difficult operation, for the rising of the tide cut off a great part of his baggage. Having reached the farther shore, he reprovisioned and set forth hastily for the Straits of Dover, making his first day's march through the forest of Crécy, beyond which lies the little town of that name. It had seemed possible, with a well-disciplined force such as his, accustomed to rapid marching, to escape the pursuit of the large feudal army which the French King had gathered and which was ready to approach from the south up the Somme valley, but on arrival at Crécy it

<sup>1</sup> The accounts of all this based upon Froissart are not reliable; our best documentary evidence is the contemporary diary of the march printed in the kitchen accounts of the English King. Froissart has no sense of topography, mixes up the two sides of the river, confuses Oisemont with Boismont, and gives a picturesque but impossible story of Blanchetaque being discovered by the aid of some local fellow—whereas Blanchetaque was, and had always been, the main, specially hardened causeway leading across the muddy estuary. It is now a lane on dry land, all this part of the Somme estuary having been reclaimed in our day.

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was discovered that the French feudal forces were too close to be neglected, and that if Edward continued in column of march in their neighbourhood his force ran the risk of being destroyed.

He therefore deployed for battle on the day after his crossing of the river. He had crossed on Friday, August 25, 1346, and on the morning of the Saturday, the 26th, he stood on a low ridge of land above a slight slope falling to the south, which depression was (and is) known as the Val aux Clercs. When the shock came between the large Valois host and the comparatively small but highly organized body of the Plantagenet King it resulted in the complete defeat of the former. The victory was due to a weapon peculiar to the British—the Welsh<sup>1</sup> long-bow. The arrows from this weapon had the advantage of a greater length and more violent impact than any other missile weapon of the day. The long-bow had the disadvantage that it could only be used by men who had been long trained to handle it, and that if its work were not effected in a very few minutes its power of checking a cavalry charge was over. Its advantage lay in the chance, during those few minutes, of throwing cavalry into rout. No one else possessed such a weapon, and it was Edward's trump card; but as the cloud of arrows shot down men and horses in the advancing cavalry the ammunition was rapidly exhausted, and if the charge were not checked in time it might overwhelm the archers. In other words, the long-bow was not a certain basis of victory, but, like almost all highly specialized tactical advantages, accompanied by its own risk of failure.

Here at Crécy the Welsh long-bow succeeded. The feudal charge of the French army was ill-disciplined and confused. The knights had no sufficient experience of what this weapon opposed to them could do—they were shot down, most of them unhorsed, and their mounts often wounded or killed; and the whole mass was soon in a welter, unable to continue the charge before the storm of arrows was spent. The first shock having thus been thrown back and the much larger bodies of the enemy being dispersed in flight or entangled in disorder on the field, Edward's army advanced, taking their prisoners for ransom, 'cleaning up,' and seeing the mass of the enemy forces now in

<sup>1</sup> The Welsh of the Marches were the chief experts in the use of this weapon, to which they were specially trained in youth.

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rout and flying in disorder towards the south, with the Valois King among them.

After this victory Edward could proceed at leisure to Calais. He besieged that town, his fleet cut off provision from the sea, he constructed huts round the land side (where Calais was protected by belts of marsh and water), and relied for success upon famine. The siege was begun but a few days after Crécy. In that winter the King of France did what he could to relieve the town, getting together another large army at Wissant. But he was unable to raise the siege, and Calais capitulated on August 3, 1347. The Plantagenet kings of England henceforward had a bastion on Continental soil, just at the edge of those Netherlands which it was their interest to keep open for their trade, and to defend against the inherited domination of the Crown of France.

A further success against the Scots at Neville's Cross, which had been won during the King's absence in France, and in which Edward's brother-in-law, the Scottish King David, was captured, further increased English power. But with the next year came something of far more moment to Europe and to England—to all Christendom—than the capture of Calais. On July 7, 1348, the plague appeared in Melcombe Regis, in Dorset, having been brought to that port by a vessel coming from France. It was the Black Death.

**The Black Death.** It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Black Death. In the story of Western Christendom the Reformation is, indeed, of greater moment, because it was of a spiritual nature, and the mind, not material things, governs the condition of mankind. But in decisive effect the material disaster of the Black Death stands second to the Reformation in the events that decided European history.

The plague was not known to the people of its own time by the name 'Black Death'; the title was a later one. But it is convenient to remember it under the name which has now become universal. It was possibly or probably a bubonic plague, spread by the agency of insects, but whether it exactly corresponded to any disease which we have to-day it is impossible to say. It came from China, first certainly appeared in Europe in the Crimea, where Genoa had a colony, and whence the Genoese brought it to the Mediterranean: it fell upon Sicily, then upon Venice, then upon Genoa.

## THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

It is possible that the highest estimates, especially when they are general ones, of the numbers it destroyed were exaggerated. More than a quarter of the town of Genoa may have survived, and perhaps nearly half the town of Venice; but there is a mass of contemporary evidence, detailed and certain, which testifies to the enormity of the disaster. The Bishop of Marseilles died, and all his chapter; Narbonne was half destroyed; 150,000 died in the small Papal territory of Avignon alone. It had gone up France through that early summer of 1348, and now on this date, in the first week of July of that year, it had invaded this island. Its effect was the more violent in Britain on account of a very wet season and a ruined harvest. The scholar population of Oxford sank to one-third of its former amount; Norwich, the second city in the kingdom, with walls three miles in circuit, with churches half as numerous as those of London, furnishes us with a list of over 50,000 dead in the years of the visitation. When it had passed twenty whole parishes in the town had gone out of use, the town had so shrunk within its walls!

That story is to be found repeated everywhere throughout the country. In London the ordinary rates of mortality multiplied by ten; detailed study of a belt in Hampshire shows whole villages depopulated; Bristol lost "almost the whole strength of the town." The prior of the Benedictines at Westminster attached to the abbey died, and thirty-seven of the monks. In one house of Augustinian Friars we have the record of all dying but two; in one Cistercian house twenty-three died out of twenty-six. Converging evidence of every kind confirms what would otherwise be an incredible story, and vividly illustrates the phrase of Petrarch, before whose eyes the pestilence developed, when he said that "posterity would not believe it."

The presentations to livings tell the same startling tale; in seven months the diocese of Exeter shows ten times the normal changes; in Buckinghamshire just on half the beneficed clergy disappeared. The monastic houses everywhere were reduced to half and less than half. So on throughout the community—and what happened in England was happening in France, in Italy, everywhere. The enormity of the blow is masked by the fact that the united civilization of Christendom, although it reeled under the shock, was not thrown down. It did not even suffer such heavy immediate changes as our time has suffered from the much lesser ordeal of the Great War. This is because the Black

## A SHORTER HISTORY OF ENGLAND

Death fell upon an active, hopeful, and vigorous culture, animated by one triumphant religion—so vital as to be able to meet even such a strain without dissolution. But there is a sense in which we can say that medieval Europe never recovered from the Black Death. For there followed upon it a change and decline which continued until the break-up of the sixteenth century.

## VI

# THE DECLINE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

## EDWARD III (SECOND HALF)

**The Effects of the Black Death.** The effects of so vast a cataclysm as the Black Death were, if they are looked at in their largest aspect, a transformation of Christendom, the decline of the medieval civilization, and the opportunity afforded to the forces that this break-up of Europe let loose to push through the ruins of the old unity. At the same time the shock of the Black Death accentuated and increased certain tendencies already present, as, for instance, the growth of separate nationalities, the weakening (for various reasons) of the moral hold of the Papacy, while the organization of its power became more rigid and apparently stronger. The Black Death also increased the tendency of the whole Church organization, including the monastic system, to crystallize and harden, and, in many places and on certain sides of its activity, to get separated from popular feeling. *The effect of the Black Death on England in particular was especially remarkable in the change of language.* Before the middle of the fourteenth century all the well-to-do in England spoke French; many below them were bilingual, especially in the towns. A lifetime later a new language, which to-day we call English, was everywhere. Again, here, as elsewhere (but more in this country than in most European nations), the Black Death began the break-up of the old manorial system. For other reasons it began to emphasize a certain contrast between the interests of the laity and those of the clergy, which was to increase through all the century and a half which lay between the Black Death and the opening of the Reformation (1350-1500).

**The Seeds of the New Language.** From the first infiltration of French before the Conquest to the Black Death is rather more than three hundred years—say, eight or nine generations, or five long lifetimes, reckoning as a long lifetime an active memory extending over fifty to sixty years. During

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this considerable period the influence of the French language in England extended continually. At first it is found spoken at court before the Conquest under Edward the Confessor, and presumably by all those about the King—his wife and brother-in-law Harold and many of the chief nobles—as it certainly was by many prominent officials who were actually French in birth and had come into the country after Ethelred's marriage to Emma, of Normandy, increasing in numbers and influence after Emma's son, Edward the Confessor, had come to the throne. With the Conquest, of course, there came a flood of French-speaking 'nobles'—*i.e.*, squires great and small—and there arrived also a considerable number of French-speaking people of the middle and lower classes.

But the spread of a language is quite different from the spread of a race or kinship, and just as the mixed dialects called Anglo-Saxon, with their strong German elements, had spread over the island many hundred years earlier, although comparatively few German-speaking men had actually settled in Britain, so from the few thousand French-speaking people of the eleventh century the French language spread rapidly throughout England to thousands of families who had nothing but native blood in them. From less than a hundred years after the Conquest onward—that is, through the reign of Henry II and the early Plantagenets—French may be called the dominating language. In the cottages of an English village you would find it little understood, only partially possibly by a few people, though many French terms got into the popular speech; but in the towns it was more and more common, and there must have been a very large belt, both in town and country but particularly in the towns, which was, as I have said, bilingual; while the upper class, including pretty well everybody who wrote, framed public policy, or expressed current thought, used French as a matter of course—and much the greater part of them could talk and think in no other language.

We have seen how French in 1300-50 might be compared to English in Wales at the present day: it is the best modern parallel by which we can understand a state of affairs which seems so strange to the modern Englishman—an England the cultural language of which was French. There were exceptions, especially in religious work, which of its nature demands (in

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Catholic society) an appeal to the poor, and popular scraps of verse have come down to us, as well as prose, which had already begun to approximate to what to-day we call English—only there was much more of the old Anglo-Saxon stuff than of French in them; but the French order of words and the simplified French syntax modified even these popular dialects.

Now, the Black Death severely wounded the educational system of England in the upper and middle classes. It left the bringing up of the children in the hands of servants or ill-instructed popular teachers; the clergy and the monks and nuns who did most of the teaching were hurriedly replaced, greatly lessened in numbers, and often superficially trained in the haste to fill the gaps which the plague had made. The influence of all these things combined was to raise a generation which, after the Black Death, began to lose, even in the upper classes, the use of the French tongue; it began to think, even in the upper classes, more and more in the new tongue, which was somewhat nearer the old Anglo-Saxon dialects than the French, although it was a fusion of both; and this tongue which thus mastered the culture of the whole country after the fourteenth century and during the first years of the fifteenth century was what to-day we call English. It was a new speech, though there may be found any number of sentences in it which are almost identical with the old Anglo-Saxon dialects, and hardly any which are identical with French sentences.

So great a social change could, of course, only come gradually; half a century after the Black Death, round the turn of the year 1400—twenty years before it and on till some years after—you find the French language holding its own, but over a more and more restricted section of the governing classes. Religious activity, whether orthodox or of the new heresies, mainly uses the new English among all classes for its medium: all Wycliffe's movement is mainly propagated in English, and the most widely read poetry is English—of which, of course, the two great examples are *Piers Plowman*, which was written between 1366 and 1400, and the works of Chaucer. These last are so like modern English that, if we modernize the spelling, we can read them with no great difficulty, and almost without the use of a glossary. William of Wykeham, the great Churchman who founded Winchester and New College at Oxford, who sprang from the populace and was a Hampshire man, writes as

a matter of course in French; so does Henry IV, and his son, Henry V, was also naturally French-speaking, though he could speak English; French, then, after 1400 was becoming more and more the language of a section who, even in the highest ranks, spoke English also. Before the end of the first third of the fifteenth century, round about the time of Joan of Arc, English has become for Englishmen of all classes the universal tongue, because it is the end of the longest lifetime of those who were brought up as children after the Black Death. A boy who was at school or learning the speech of his home round about 1360 was a very old man by the time that French died out from being the general tongue of the English governing classes.

One of the results of this change in the language was, of course, that England was after it somewhat more cut off from the general culture of the Western Continent than it had been: and this 'nationalization' of England increased as the Middle Ages drew to their end.

**The Revolutionary Feeling.** The adventure of the French wars began again after the years which had been ruined by the Black Death. Five years had passed since the end of the worst of the visitation when the attack on the Valois kingship was renewed in 1355. One main cause of this effort was the outbreak of social trouble at home, which often tempts rulers to foreign adventure.

The overwhelming mortality of the Black Death had produced a sort of tidal wave in the economic situation of England. First the lack of consumers (and the difficulty of transport) made existing stocks abnormally cheap; then it made the wages of hired labour abnormally dear. Men began to get from two to three—even up to five times—what they used to be paid for an hour's work at this or that, and such a state of affairs, of course, arrests industry. Here, however, we must beware of a common error. To-day we live under a system called 'capitalist,' in which the greater part of men live upon a wage. In the fourteenth century, though a wage system had begun and many were already mainly dependent on a wage, wages did not determine the outlook of the *average* man. Much the greater part of the population lived in the villages, and these were inhabited by families who, in various degrees, were *peasants*—not wage-slaves, but men holding land which, though

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they paid dues on it, was in practice their own. They could not be turned out of their houses and their hereditary rights in land. Some, who were not peasants but landless men, had to hire themselves out, and the peasants themselves received wages for the work they did side by side with the work on their own land. In the towns, of course, there were already, by 1350, a large number of people, though certainly not a majority, mainly dependent upon wages, for the small, independent craftsman and shopkeeper formed the normal type.

Efforts, more or less successful, were made by the Government to bring wages down to the old level of before the plague, but these efforts were forcible and savoured of tyranny. At the same time the dues of so many days' labour, which, in theory, the lord of the manor could still exact from the peasants, had, in practice, been more and more commuted into money payments made by the peasant to the lord. Or, again, though wages were not paid for this kind of labour, there were customary gifts attached to it, in the way of food and drink, etc., which this sudden disturbance in prices now rendered onerous to the upper classes. The peasantry and the labourers felt confusedly that a new opportunity for greatly increased comfort and leisure had appeared before them, as a result of the Black Death, and that, by the new laws, it was being taken away. Moreover, the great plague had done what all great social strains do, what the Great War clearly did in our time in England, and what the Revolutionary Wars did in France a hundred years ago—it made men feel more equal. For under such a strain, which all have to bear, the native equality of mankind is emphasized. Wherefore there was a simmering revolutionary discontent running through society during the whole of that generation (1350-1400), and we shall see later how it broke into flame. Meanwhile it was largely accountable for the new attack by the Plantagenet English kings upon the Valois dynasty reigning at Paris, for the safety-valve to discontent at home is victory abroad.

### **Poitiers : the Campaign and its Momentary Success.**

Another factor was at work demanding the renewal of the French war, and that was the beginning of a new Lancastrian political movement: the beginning of usurpation by the younger branch of the royal family. This movement also sought an outlet in the prestige which would be gained by foreign

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victories. The effect of this Lancastrian movement we shall see later.

The plan of campaign originating in 1355 was a double attack on France from the north and south. The King, Edward, was to advance on Paris southward and westward from Calais, and his eldest son, the Black Prince, now a young man of twenty-five and already a famous soldier, was to march eastward and northward from Bordeaux. The first part of this plan came to nothing. John, King of France, would not offer battle, and Edward III, King of England, was back in Calais in less than a fortnight. He did not even get as far as Amiens. But the Black Prince led a great raid in that autumn, burning towns and villages everywhere east of the frontiers of Gascony, while his father, back in Britain, was leading a somewhat similar raid into Scotland, France's ally.

In 1356 the Black Prince started on a second raid with a comparatively small column, made up mainly of Gascons but containing not a few commanders (and their contingents) who were already English-speaking. The Black Prince himself was, of course, nothing but a French-speaking knight. It was with about 12,000 men that he went right up to the Loire, looting as he went, and then turned—his baggage-train loaded with spoil—towards the south again. King John of France panted after him with a great feudal gathering, just like that which had earlier been defeated at Crécy; and the shock between the two forces—the small retreating body of the Black Prince, with its great baggage-train of loot, and the very large body of the French—took place about four miles outside Poitiers, on Monday, September 19, 1356. Once again the better-disciplined mercenary forces of the Plantagenet triumphed over the loosely organized feudal masses following the Valois King. The victory was not, like that of Crécy, directly due to the long-bow, though the first check to the French was given by that weapon; what decided the issue was a flank movement made by a Gascon squire (*i.e.*, small noble), who went round, hidden by rising land, to the north of the French and struck them on the flank and rear. The thing would never have been done, however, nor so small a force have had such an effect, save for the bad *moral* of the feudal forces following the Valois King, John.

The victory of Poitiers would have been memorable enough for the glory of it, as Crécy was, though it would not have had

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the same fruits as Crécy—that is, a foothold on the Continent and the command of the Straits of Dover—but what made it of immediately greater effect than Crécy was the capture of the French King. He went forward into the hopeless confusion of the broken French front, fighting on foot with his sword among his knights, and was surrounded and taken.

Now, the capture of the king had in those days an immense political effect—such was the prestige of the royal office and the nature of kingly government. It was an effect which might be compared to the occupation of a capital to-day. And though it were, as in this case, but an accident, and not the necessary consequence of a victory, the decisive effect was present none the less. Supposing a part of one's country to be nearly separated from the rest by an isthmus; suppose that in the course of a war this isthmus is occupied by an enemy, and the district beyond it cut off so that it falls into his power—the effect would be decisive. One would make almost any terms to restore the unity of the country and get rid of the invasion. So it was with the capture of King John at Poitiers. He was treated with great honour among his fellow French-speaking nobles in London, but he could not be released without the payment of an enormous ransom, and, what was in the eyes of contemporaries even graver than the payment of a ransom, the cession of his feudal suzerainty over the old French Plantagenet provinces. King John, a prisoner in London, signed the terms of capitulation in that capital on March 24, 1359. All the old Plantagenet inheritance had passed, on paper at least, to Edward III, the Plantagenet King: Normandy, Maine, Anjou, which had gone a century and a half before, as well as Gascony, which had been held all the time. One may say all the west of France was signed away to Edward III by John of France.

**The Treaty of Brétigny.** When the news came to Paris the French nation would not ratify what the King had done. The States-General—that is, one of those very rare meetings of a central Parliament in France, superior to the provincial Parliaments which had been established in so many provinces—echoed the unanimous national protest—but these were words only. Edward III invaded France once more with a very large army, divided into three columns, and made in November for Rheims, the town where the French kings were crowned and where Edward himself possibly intended to be crowned King of

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all those French provinces which even in the old days had not been independently Plantagenet, but had been held under allegiance to the king of France. But Edward failed to take Rheims. In the spring, on April 7, 1360, he attacked Paris. He could not take Paris either. The French, however, were exhausted; the absence of their King and his capitulation had ruined what was left of their morale; and a month later, on May 8, 1360, there was provisionally signed at Brétigny, a little village just east of Chartres, a treaty ratifying the surrender which had already been signed in London by King John.

This famous treaty, which was so soon to come to nothing, confirmed on paper, as had the original capitulation of the French King in London, full sovereignty for the Plantagenet King over all the old Plantagenet provinces—Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and the rest, as well as over Gascony in the country south of the Garonne. Though it is always known as the Treaty of Brétigny, the draft there drawn up was not final. The final, and what Edward III hoped would be the decisive, document was confirmed at Calais several months later, on October 24, 1360.

Now, in this last draft, which was the determining one, there appeared a phrase which gave a loophole to the Valois Crown for getting out of its obligations and for raising itself from the ruin into which it had fallen. In this phrase it was stipulated that the Plantagenet King should hold the old Plantagenet fiefs "*as the King of France had held them.*" On the face of them these words would seem to mean that Edward III was to step into the shoes of John of Valois, King of the French, and to be fully sovereign over all the old provinces, with no allegiance to the Crown of Paris. But the French lawyers began to drive a coach and four through the document not long after it was signed. They said that the King of France had held Normandy (for instance) not as King, but as Duke; he had escheated Normandy to the Crown of France under feudal law, confiscating it from John, the Plantagenet King of England, on account of his misdemeanours; but in taking over Normandy from John he had *not* (said the French lawyers) taken it over from John Plantagenet, King of England, but from John Plantagenet, Duke of Normandy. The King of France before the Treaty of Brétigny (or rather of Calais) had been Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou, etc., and by such titles only had the right to rule those provinces. Edward III, stepping into his shoes, did

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not become King over them, but only Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou, etc., and still owed allegiance to the French Crown.

Of course, all this legal humbug and word-splitting would have meant nothing if the Plantagenet had had the strength to hold these foreign territories, and if French national feeling had not grown to what it had become in the century and a half since Philip Augustus had seized the Plantagenet territories abroad. But the Plantagenet Edward of 1356 had not the strength to hold them. He had to act from England, while all the French nobility were on the spot, and determined to restore the rule of the national dynasty. Thus in a very few years the capture of the French King at Poitiers and the subsequent Treaty of Brétigny were wiped out. The whole of France became filled with successful local fighting against Edward III's men, the recapture of castles, raids and counter-raids. King John of France, because his full ransom could not be paid, went back as a prisoner to London and died there; the local, scattered, but universal effort of the French noble class to recover the land signed away in the treaty continued none the less, the most famous name among the leaders of the movement being that of Du Guesclin.

**John of Gaunt.** King John of France, the Valois, died in London, at the Palace of the Savoy, in 1364. Not quite five years later, in January 1369, the new King of France, Charles V, the son of John, demanded homage from the Black Prince for Aquitaine. Edward III took the opportunity for a bargain. He said that if they would leave him full sovereignty over the southern provinces, including Poitou, he would abandon the claim to Normandy, Maine, and Anjou. But the French nobility urged their King to continue the struggle. The Black Prince avenged his honour by a dreadful massacre in the town of Limoges—in his eyes the surrender of Limoges to the French King was treason. But this raid of his had no permanent effect. John, Duke of Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> the younger brother of the Black Prince, marched from the north in a similar raid which also failed of its effect. He was called John of Gaunt from the town of Ghent, where he had been born. By the end of 1374 the Plantagenets still held Calais, of course, and the towns in the

<sup>1</sup> He was Duke of Lancaster through his marriage with his cousin, the heiress of that house of Lancaster which sprang from Edward I's brother.

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south—that is, the seaports of the Garonne and the Adour, a few castles on the Dordogne, and a few footholds inland—but they never again held all Gascony firmly, as they had done before the wars began.

So ended the first period of the Hundred Years War. It added to the weakening of civilization, doing something to increase the evils which the Black Death had begun, but it did nothing to increase the strength of the Plantagenet Crown, which had launched its claim to the French monarchy nearly forty years before. On June 8, 1376, the Black Prince, Edward's eldest son and heir, died—a man already ruined in health and decrepit, though he was only forty-five. Just over a year later, on June 21, 1377, his father, Edward the King, who had long fallen into premature senility, with a long white beard like a man of eighty, and forgetting everything, died in his turn, almost abandoned.

### RICHARD II (CALLED RICHARD OF BORDEAUX)

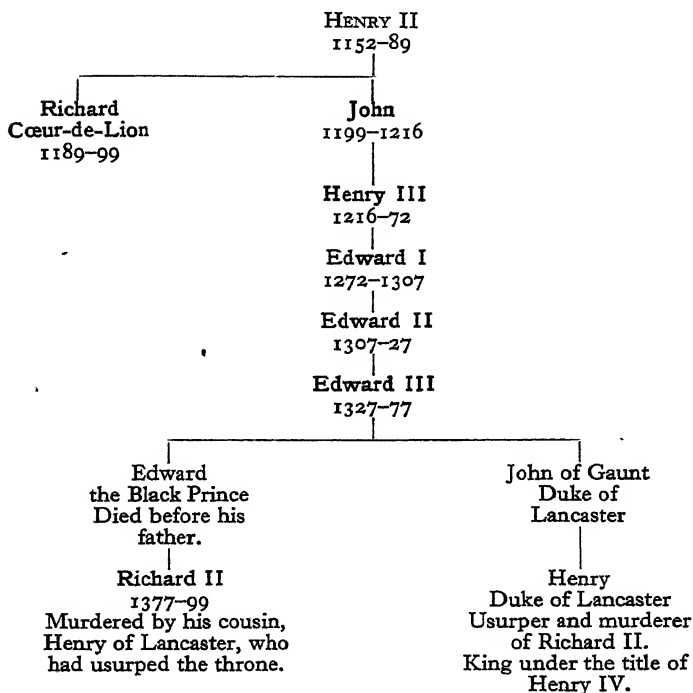
**The Young King.** The son of the Black Prince, Richard, was just over ten years old when his father died. He had been born at Bordeaux, and was known by the name of that town.

It was a disaster for England that a child, and a child of so exceptional a character—highly sensitive, too much of an artist, timid, ill-suited to conflict—should have come to the throne at this moment. The opportunity was more than a temptation, it was a positive appeal, to his uncle, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, to usurp power—and one may say that the Lancastrian usurpation, with all its ill-consequences, began in those first days of the new reign, though it took more than twenty years to mature. John, Duke of Lancaster, was, this midsummer of 1377, a man in the full activity of his powers, just past his thirty-seventh birthday. He was the fourth son of Edward III, born, as we have seen, at Ghent. The English later pronounced the name of the town "Gaunt"—a corruption of the French nasal "Gand"—instead of following the local Flemish pronunciation of "Ghent." The Prince therefore has become known to history as John of Gaunt, and Shakespeare's plays have fixed the term in the general imagination. It will be remembered how the title of Lancaster arose: the earldom was given to the son of Henry III; and it will be remembered how

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### THE RIGHT PLANTAGENET LINE UP TO HENRY OF LANCASTER'S USURPATION



Thomas, the son of this first Earl of Lancaster, the first cousin of Edward II, had led a feudal revolt against him. This tradition of rebellion continued in the descendants. Another son, Henry, became the third Earl; his son, the fourth Earl, was made Duke of Lancaster to indicate his royal blood (for Duke was a royal title) in 1341. He had no male heir, the line ending in his daughter Blanche.

Now, John of Gaunt had married this heiress, and thus became possessed of her vast wealth; for the strength of the Lancastrian movement was based upon an exceptional command of money. But John of Gaunt had also ambition to use that money for his own purposes; he had better health than his brothers—which counted for a good deal—and he had security of succession, for

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a son Henry had been born to him only three months after the birth of Richard II. It was through this marriage that John of Gaunt had in his turn become Duke of Lancaster by right of his wife.

Although Richard II was so young, John of Gaunt did not show his hand to begin with. The Black Prince had been a popular figure, and the very youth of the little King appealed to the English. Moreover, there was considerable resistance in his own class to the influence which Lancaster tried to exercise. Parliament, which met for the new reign, was opposed to him. He protested his loyalty, and in so doing added to the suspicions against him. Meanwhile the revolutionary temper among the people, which took the form neither of antagonism to the little King nor even to the Lancastrian, was fermenting. To the causes which have already been given for this was added the acute necessity for additional revenue which had arisen as a result of the loss of France. The Crown needed an exceptional grant of money, especially as two new expeditions across the Channel had failed in the three years after Richard's succession to the throne.

**The Peasants' Revolt. The Poll-tax and Attempted Revolution.** Aids therefore had been voted by the Parliament over and above the regular royal revenue, but these did not suffice, and recourse was had to a tax which should fall in theory upon every subject, though the clergy voted their contribution separately. The tax was graduated, from the amount due from the labourer or small peasant, who paid the equivalent of between 7s. and 10s. of our money—a very heavy impost even for the small-farmer peasant of that day, who was comparatively well off compared with the agricultural labourer of our own time—to the sum levied upon the landed classes of the lesser sort, which was about £25 of our money. The greater landlords paid about the equivalent of £50, and the richest men in the kingdom were, in proportion, let off lightly, with something over the equivalent of £300 each.

It was an unfair graduation, and one which helped to increase the discontent, but, of course, the levy was made very irregularly. It was expected to produce £50,000—about a million of our money. It only produced half the estimate. This experiment was tried in 1379. In 1380 there came a second and more serious effort to impose a poll-tax that would really be widespread. This

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again was not levied universally. It could not be. The feeling against that would have been too strong. What happened, as one can see by looking at the lists of payers which have come down to us, was the *selection* of a number of payers in each village. Sometimes, especially where there were well-paid craftsmen to be dealt with, a very full list would be made; in other cases there was obviously a compromise, and only a certain number were chosen to make up the sum demanded. The tax was supposed to fall upon every one over fourteen, but over and over again you see a short list of names each of which has "So-and-so and his wife" written after it—and there is no mention of young unmarried boys and girls from fourteen upward. The estimates of population, therefore, made on the basis of these lists are not sound. The total population may not have recovered fully since the Black Death, but it cannot have fallen much short of four million by 1389.<sup>1</sup>

But though the tax was levied irregularly and spared many people—or, rather, though only a certain number were made to pay for and presumably arrange with the rest—discontent was acute, coupled with the unpopularity of the manorial lords, who were attempting to enforce the old labour dues, and with the public annoyance at the disasters abroad. So the mass of the agricultural population broke into open revolt.

The day fixed for the payment of the tax was Whit Sunday, June 8, 1381, and the first risings began in Exeter on May 30. Just afterwards the peasantry of Kent rose. The masses in London (and in all towns) were full of grievances against the dues payable to the ecclesiastical corporations and against privileged foreigners in the ports, over and above the master-grievance of the tax. The revolt was general from at least as far north as Lincoln to the Channel: a Kentish force of very great size—with those who had come to swell it from elsewhere it was estimated at 100,000—marched on London. The Government was taken by surprise, the court took refuge in the Tower—but John of Gaunt was not with them. The boy-King was taken down the river to meet the bearers of the rebel petition, but

<sup>1</sup> I have elsewhere analysed the list of one typical village. The squire and his wife pay some £10 to £12 of our money; five substantial farmers from £8 to £9, and others down to as little as £4 or £5. Smaller farmers pay about £3 10s.; the craftsmen of the village pay £2 to £3; and of the forty-three male names mentioned, obviously less than the total male adult population, only five pay the minimum (as labourers) of 6s. to 10s.

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the Archbishop who was with him, Sudbury, was frightened and turned back—whereat the rebels sacked the Archbishop's palace at Lambeth. The London mob rose and looted the Duke of Lancaster's magnificent Palace of the Savoy; they blew up the great hall with gunpowder—the first appearance, I think, of that instrument in English civil commotions. All this was in the second week of June.

The anarchy was quelled by a trick. The rebels were told that their demands would be accepted if the armed force among them would retreat to Mile End, and that the King would ride out to grant their demands—which were the ending of all rights to forced labour on the manors and all other dues on arable land, fixed rents at 6*d.* (10*s.* to 12*s.*) an acre, with other points. A charter was drawn up granting these requests, and on June 15 (a Saturday) young Richard, now a boy fourteen years old, courageous like all the Plantagenets, rode out to meet the mob—but not until the rebels had murdered the Archbishop and Hales, the Treasurer, who had ordered the collecting of the tax.

When Richard appeared Wat Tyler, the leader of the rebels, seized the young King's bridle, and he was struck down and killed. For the moment Richard himself was in danger, but he put himself at the head of the rebels, led them out to the north of the city, and by promising to give them their demands, and by the mere popularity of kingship, the danger had passed. But the territorial classes and the great merchants against whom the rising had been made broke the pledged word. By the end of the month of June the manorial lords were rallying, coming into London armed and mounted, with the small organized forces of retainers which each could command. What was left of the rebellion was crushed, and the county in which the revolution had been best organized—Norfolk—saw it thoroughly defeated, largely through the military temper of the Bishop of Norwich, who fought a battle with the insurgents and won it.

The abortive rising, known as the Peasants' Revolt, had failed as a political movement, for it was chaotic, but the circumstances of the time made for its economic success in spite of the anger of the territorial classes. The forced labour in the villages began to be repealed almost universally, money payments being substituted for it, and the countrysides settled down.

**Wycliffe.** One singular aspect of the general discontent was the momentary rise in England of what began as a private

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quarrel within the clerical body and continued as a piece of religious enthusiasm, growing into a heresy, and was more vaguely connected with the general protest against clerical wealth. The chief name in this ill co-ordinated but general movement was that of Wycliffe.

This man, who may have been born a little before the Black Death, got mixed up with a dispute as to the headship of a small Oxford foundation, which he claimed and lost on an appeal to Rome, a few years before the beginning of Richard II's reign. He was a man of learning, with a considerable following, which took up, as he did, a violent criticism of the mendicant orders, the Franciscans, and voiced the general ill-ease of the time in furthering the ideas which had been set down most fully by Fitzralph, an Archbishop of Armagh. But Fitzralph, whom they now copied, had only taken up ideas already current on the Continent, notably in the universities. It was an old heretical theory that the right to property should be made dependent upon a state of grace in the donor of it, and this was mixed up with another idea, less bizarre but equally heretical, that the powers of the clergy were inoperative unless they were exercised by a priest or bishop himself in a state of grace. The movement was not one against the clerical body as a whole, and its admitted spiritual position, privileges, and special powers; it was rather a quarrel within the clerical body itself, favouring the secular clergy against the mendicant orders, and flattering the revolutionary spirit of the time in its attack on the wealthier classes: notably on the large revenues of the official Church—the incomes of convents, monasteries, and sees. The movement to which Wycliffe's name has been attached began to be organized; its popular side was marked by the setting up of a number of itinerant preachers who were called the "Poor Priests," and a translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular was made by Wycliffe and his followers, with the object of supporting their doctrines and in rivalry to the existing popular translation—or rather translations; for the translations of the Bible into the vernacular took the form of separate books, though there seems to have been already a compilation of the whole into one book in the new English tongue. It seems certain that the full and complete Wycliffite translation has disappeared under the very searching orders for seeking out copies and destroying them. For what now passes as 'Wycliffe's Bible' is to be found in the

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most regular and orthodox collections and contains nothing heretical, though sometimes an heretical preface was tacked on to it.

The Duke of Lancaster, ever ready to fish in troubled waters, appeared as a sort of patron of the movement, but when Wycliffe, a little before the Peasants' Revolt, began to play with obvious heresy, especially in the matter of the Real Presence, this patronage was withdrawn. Wycliffe himself made a declaration on the subject which was called his recantation, but which, in confused language, partly reiterated his views. He was not troubled by personal persecution, and died in peace on the last day of 1384. His movement lingered on in the shape of what was called Lollardry—no very fixed or definable heresy, but a spirit of religious enthusiasm accompanied by the singing of psalms and a general antagonism to the official Church. It had no long life, and during the course of the next century disappeared; nor had it any effect upon the later Reformation, with which it is sometimes erroneously connected.

**Young Richard affirms his Power.** Richard of Bordeaux in that same year, 1384, passed his seventeenth birthday and prepared to affirm his power. His suspicion of Lancaster's designs grew stronger, and those designs had a growing foundation in the absence of an heir. The lad had been married to a princess of Bohemia, but he had had no son. John of Gaunt was still heir-presumptive, and had, as we have seen, a son of Richard's own age to succeed him; but Richard met this potential conspiracy against him by a bold stroke. At the end of the year 1385, after a great raid into Scotland during which he had reason to suspect Lancaster of treason, the King named Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, his heir. Roger Mortimer was the descendant of that Mortimer who had been, at the beginning of the century, the lover of Queen Isabella. And his claim to be heir to England arose thus (see table at p. 225).

There had been a son of Edward III's, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, younger than the Black Prince but older than John of Gaunt. This prince was dead, and had only left a daughter and heiress, Philippa, but she, as being the daughter of the elder son, could transmit the claim to the crown with better right than Lancaster, the younger brother. She married Edmund Mortimer, the great-grandson of that Mortimer who had been the lover of Queen Isabella, and their child was this Roger

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Mortimer whom Richard II now acknowledged as his heir, pending the possible birth of some child of his own.

John of Gaunt for the moment had ceased to intrigue: in 1386-87 he was away on the Continent, making a feudal claim to the crown of Castile through his marriage, but the rebels found another leader in another uncle of the King's, the Duke of Gloucester. The opposition attacked the King's friends, notably de Vere, to whom Richard had given the government of Ireland, and Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, who was devoted to Richard's interests and who was his Chancellor. The rebel spirit went so far that the young King was threatened with deposition; he allowed a prosecution of Suffolk by the Commons—that is, the lesser gentry, who were managed by the King's uncles—and suffered the humiliation of seeing a committee set up to overlook his income. In all this there entered a certain weakness in Richard's temperament: he was not yet twenty-one, and he seems to have shrunk from decisive action. But, like many another man artistic in character and over-sensitive, he proved capable of decision in a crisis. The lawyers supported him, and when the commissioners set up to control his revenue proclaimed that they would continue their rule for a year the King was supported by the lawyers in his determination to assert his royal rights. His judges decided in his favour, and, using that decision, he came into London, where he was received with enthusiasm.

But at first he failed. The princes of the blood royal were too strong for him, with Gloucester at their head, controlling the Parliament, and joined by John of Gaunt's young son, Henry, Earl of Derby. The rebels drove into exile or put to death those who supported Richard, including certain of the judges—among those killed being the Chief Justice—and they murdered Burley, who had been the Black Prince's devoted comrade and the loyal guardian of Richard himself in his boyhood. For a whole year the rightful King lay in eclipse, when suddenly, on May 3, 1389, he found himself able to seize power, through the quarrels which had broken out between the rebel nobles, when it no longer suited the book of the Lancastrians under young Derby that Gloucester should be in power.

**Richard's Personal Rule.** As commonly happens when the rule of one man succeeds to that of a clique, order was restored, and things began to go well. The taxes on which the rebels had

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battened were reduced, and it was during these years of Richard's direct control that the very important Statute of *Præmunire* was passed. Had it been accepted by the Papacy it would have had the effect of a concordat, but the Papacy, although already troubled by the Great Schism, did not accept it. It was the King's own act, with which the Parliament had nothing to do, and that it always had the force of law is sufficient proof that the consent of Parliament was not yet necessary to make a statute. *Præmunire* provides forfeiture for those who should bring into England Papal Bulls or rescripts without the licence of the Crown. It was not a refusal to receive Papal jurisdiction in England—indeed, it did not come within a hundred miles of such an idea, which it would have been impossible for the time to conceive—but it established, and especially on the financial side, a co-operation between the civil and the ecclesiastical power. This, coupled with the parallel Statute of *Provisors*, would check that draining of wealth abroad which had so disastrously increased during the residency of the Papacy at Avignon.

### **The Death of the Queen. The Second Marriage.**

Richard's first Queen had been childless: her husband had loved her so passionately that on her death he seemed at first a broken man; but there was yet time for him to marry again, and after a first expedition to Ireland (of which more in a moment) he did so, in little more than two years after the death of the childless Anne of Bohemia.

Three tasks lay before Richard of Bordeaux, now a young man approaching his thirtieth year. The first was to find some sort of settlement in the relations between England and Ireland; the second was to put an end, if possible, to the running sore of the French quarrel, which had already caused so much financial trouble and which threatened more; and the third was to provide an heir to the throne. The second and third he proposed to merge by marrying a princess of the house of Valois. It could only be a nominal marriage for some years, as the Princess, Isabella, was only eight years old; but the contract would be binding, and would doubtless bear fruit in due time. It was confirmed at the end of 1396. The young Valois child was solemnly crowned Queen of England early in the next year, and had his enemies spared Richard to complete the marriage in due time and to get an heir, history would know

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nothing of these great events of the fifteenth century, the nearly accomplished Anglo-French realm and the story of Joan of Arc.

Richard did not use his personal rule with folly or vindictiveness in the matter of those rebels of the blood royal who had been, and who might be again, in power. He legitimized the bastards of his uncle, John of Gaunt, known by the family name of Beaufort, the children of the Duke's mistress, Catherine Swynford. When the Archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant he appointed to it Arundel, who, with his brother, had been among his worst enemies; to Gloucester he offered the government of Ireland, which was to be so important in his new schemes. But Gloucester refused it. He and the new Archbishop's brother, Lord Arundel, began conspiring again, so Richard seized Gloucester and sent him to Calais; and Derby and his father, John of Gaunt, agreed to the act—partly because they were jealous of Gloucester, partly because they were biding their time.

But, in spite of these conspiracies, there was no blood shed, and Richard's mildness in this was certainly an error. He might have ruined his enemies had he sent some few of them to a just execution. But on September 16, 1398, he struck a blow which he thought would save him from the whole batch of conspirators—he exiled young Henry of Lancaster, sending him to Calais, but unfortunately still treating him with too much leniency.

When, however, John of Gaunt died on February 3 of the following year, he did confiscate that vast income which was the backbone of the Lancastrian power, but he only did so on a judicial decision that Henry's outlawry had prevented his inheriting his father's title or lands.

**The Lancastrian Treason.** Richard now imagined himself secure. The little Queen was by this time twelve years old; Roger Mortimer, whom the King had declared his heir, had been killed in Ireland, but had left a child who was now heir-presumptive to the throne. So Richard set out to complete that task in Ireland which was to have been the chief business of his reign. The management of the kingdom he left in the hands of his uncle, the Duke of York, whom he mistrusted the least of his relatives, and he sailed from Milford Haven on May 9, 1399, landing at Waterford two days later. He had taken with him Henry of Lancaster's little son—the

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later Henry V—as a sort of hostage; though no one knew better than Henry of Lancaster himself that no harm would happen to the child whatever he himself did, for the rebels trusted to Richard's generous nature.

Richard on setting out for Ireland left York's son, Albemarle, charged with the duty of sending further troops and provisions to Ireland. To an onlooker who did not know how wide the plot of treason had been spread it looked as though the first business of the reign was about to be accomplished, and a final arrangement of English and Irish relations established. Many of the chieftains had joined the King, and when his army should have arrived in full force he could have negotiated a national Irish policy and settlement. During his first visit to Ireland he had already laid the foundations of that most desirable thing.

But just at this moment the final treason fell. Albemarle was certainly in league with Henry of Lancaster; Richard was held up in Dublin until July, waiting for reinforcements, and was so kept while Lancaster was forming his final plans. On the 4th of that month (July 4, 1399) Henry of Lancaster landed at Ravenspur, at the mouth of the Humber, with a small force. The Percies joined him. He took a solemn public oath in Doncaster that he came to claim his lands and no more and was without thought of treason. York marched west to meet the King on his landing from Ireland, but it was his intention also to betray. Henry of Lancaster followed westward with increasing forces, and met York at Berkeley Castle on July 27. Richard on his return from Ireland found himself without an army; Albemarle, still betraying and pretending to be a friend, advised delay, and furnished no troops. And the leaders of such forces as Richard had brought back with him deserted him in the face of the large force now in the hands of the rebels.

When the King got to Conway Castle, coming up from the south of Wales, he had no more than a guard of sixty men. He sent embassies to negotiate with his all-powerful cousin and rebel, who lay at Chester, and in return Henry of Lancaster sent envoys to him—the King. What passed in the negotiation is doubtful, but the most probable version is that Richard's freedom was promised to him and the security of an adequate income, and it is probable that Lancaster also promised not to depose the King—it is improbable that Richard consented to abdicate.

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**The Death of the King.** Richard of Bordeaux surrendered to his red-haired, broad-faced, and cunning cousin at Flint Castle on August 19. Even now Lancaster lied, showing all due deference to his King and protesting that he had only come to help in government. This time the King was taken off, surrounded by Lancaster's forces, to London. They reached the capital on September 1 (1399). Lancaster sent his victim off secretly to Westminster, to avoid the popular demonstrations in his favour, and on the next day, September 2, that victim was as secretly taken down the Thames on the ebb-tide to the Tower.

He was never seen again, save by the gaolers and servants of the man who did him to death.

Lancaster summoned the Parliament for the last week of the month in Westminster Hall, but Richard was, of course, denied access to it. A parchment was produced purporting to be Richard's voluntary resignation, and Henry, making a great sign of the Cross and speaking in the English language, "challenged [that is, claimed] this realm of England." He advanced no definite title on that last day of September when he seized the reality of power, but within a fortnight, on October 13 following, he had himself hurriedly crowned, and his reign must be dated from that day, under the title of Henry IV.

What happened to Richard of Bordeaux no one certainly knows. The son of one of the principal conspirators, Percy, affirmed not four years later that the King had been starved to death, probably at Pontefract, in close custody. A dead body was brought from Pontefract on March 12, 1400, and exposed, with a most emaciated face, in St Paul's Cathedral; and a great crowd passed by it, hour after hour, to satisfy themselves that it was indeed their King, and that he was dead.

## THE LANCASTRIAN USURPATION

### HENRY IV

**Unpopularity and Instability of the New Reign.** Henry of Lancaster begins to rule with the new century, in this year 1400-1, after a fashion and under disabilities unknown to any of the earlier kings.

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He was hardly felt to be a real king at all. He was not only a usurper, but an open perjurer, and he was also, in the general judgment, responsible for the murder of his cousin, the late King. It was impossible under these circumstances that he should have any general support or that he should regard himself as thoroughly established as a legitimate monarch.

The true position has been distorted by two things. First, Henry of Lancaster began to reign just at the moment when a change in the general language had come, and English was growing to be universal, so that the traditions of the old French-speaking Plantagenet society were dimmed, and a sort of false nationalism appears about the Lancastrian name. Secondly, the second great usurpation in English history—that of the Tudors—claimed in a remote fashion the Lancastrian tradition as its own; therefore Tudor literature, and especially the plays of Shakespeare, with their profound and increasing effect upon English thought, emphasized and continued the Lancastrian myth.

It may be asked why Henry of Lancaster committed these appalling crimes in order to enjoy the revenues and prestige of kingship when he was already the next legitimate heir to the throne. It might seem that he had only to wait to make certain of the succession in a more solid fashion by inheritance. The English people certainly demanded a Plantagenet, and in the struggle which might have ensued between the Lancastrian house and the Mortimers (who were the heirs by strictly feudal right and who had been nominated by Richard II) the Lancastrians would be bound to win. The principal motive which urged Henry of Lancaster to do what he did was the approaching possibility of a direct heir to the throne. In a year or so the French Princess whom Richard had married might bear a son, and if that were to happen all the long scheming of the Lancastrian house to seize the monarchy would be in ruins.

Having thus secured power unjustly and hated by the populace, the new King was forced to rely upon forces which were his equals rather than his subjects; he had to ally himself with the official Church, the great prelates, and notably Arundel, who was now Archbishop of Canterbury, just at the moment when the officialdom of the Church was beginning to lose the affection of the people. He had to rely upon the great nobles who had supported him in his usurpation, and notably on the

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Percies. He had to scheme and flatter the Estates of the Realm, and his dynasty would later fall so low as to lean upon those bastard half-brothers and -sisters of Henry's, the Beauforts.

**The Rebellions.** In the very first days of that very first year, 1400, a sharp rising against the new King had to be met and settled. It was not so serious as to threaten his power, but it was a symptom of what men were feeling, for those who had rebelled were among those who had been his supporters in his usurpation. Five of the original Lords Appellant, as the rebels had called themselves, plotted to capture the King, and would have done so had he not been warned in time and left Windsor for London. But the serious trial of strength was that which opened with the rebellion of the Percies. There was a persistent rumour that Richard was still alive and in Scotland, and the Percies, in September 1402, had won in support of the new dynasty a victory over the Scots at Homildon Hill. The incident rather strengthened the Percies than Henry, who was also doing badly in Wales, where Glendower was calling himself King and had captured the castle of Conway. Edmund Mortimer, the uncle and guardian of the true heir, the little Earl of March, had the task of holding the borders of Wales. Glendower captured him, but Mortimer was the brother-in-law of Henry Percy, known as Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland; and the Percies as a whole, the great family of the North who more than anyone else had put Henry IV on the throne (and who had borne the naked sword, which appeared as a novel symbol of claim by force at the coronation), were prepared to blackmail the man whom they had set up.

They demanded moneys for the ransom of Mortimer, and large sums for their expenses in the Scottish fighting, and in the summer of 1403 Hotspur, Henry Percy, made open war. He marched down towards North Wales, with the object of joining Glendower and attacking the new King, and he declared that if Richard was still alive it was his object to restore him, and if not to put the little Earl of March upon the throne. Henry was in the Midlands on his way to Scotland when he heard the news that Percy had started marching south four days before; he marched west immediately, raising levies as he went, and the two armies, each of about 14,000 men, raced

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for Shrewsbury—a race which Henry won. The battle of Shrewsbury was fought, with great violence, to the north of the town, on July 21, 1403. Percy was killed, and the consequent victory falling to Henry was what most confirmed him on the throne. He had also another piece of good luck in the capture of the young heir of Scotland, James, as he was sailing down the Yorkshire coast on his way to France in 1405: and as that young heir's father, Robert, was to die in a few months, Henry would thus be possessed of the person of the new King of Scotland.

Further to secure his throne Henry did two things which did but emphasize its insecurity. He humbled himself before the gentry in Parliament, giving them the right to control his domestic expenditure, and he murdered without trial that holy and revered man, Scrope, the Archbishop of York, who had openly affirmed his devotion to Richard and the right of the true heir. Henry's own Chief Justice, Gascoyne, refused to condemn the old man, saying that he had no right to try a cleric, so the King in his panic had the Archbishop beheaded without any legal form at all: a murder.

**Henry and the Papacy: the Schism.** But apart from the possession of the King of Scotland Henry had elements of fortune on his side. It was the height of the Great Schism in the Papacy. The Popes had left Avignon for Rome nearly thirty years before, at the beginning of Richard II's reign, but the French monarchy proposed to carry on a schismatic Papacy of its own in the French city where the Papacy had been for the last seventy years. Christendom was divided in allegiance between rival Pontiffs in a quarrel which went on for forty years, and among other effects this had, of course, the main effect of degrading the Papacy in the public eye and lowering the respect for the greatest of all European offices. The Schism left men doubtful of Papal claims for the first time, and therefore it also strengthened the national dynasties and the separate feeling of each province against the old idea of European unity. A ruler such as Henry IV, for instance, by promising to support one claimant to the headship of the Church, or threatening to support his rival, could obtain privileges and concessions which progressively weakened the Papal power, and in the particular case of Henry the best example of this was the way in which the Papacy treated the

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murder of Scrope. Pope Innocent VII published a sentence of excommunication against all those concerned in that crime, but when Henry protested and defended himself Gregory XII raised the excommunication and did nothing more. What a gulf between this attitude and that of the Holy See in the days of Becket's murder, during the height of the true Middle Ages! There is no better example of how all medieval ideals were declining.

**Bramham Moor.** The last effort to get rid of the usurper came in 1408 (February). Northumberland had been wandering in exile ever since his son had lost the battle of Shrewsbury; but now, more than four years after that defeat, he raised a few forces, insufficient for his purpose, and again challenged his enemy. The royal army met his at Bramham Moor, near Tadcaster, on February 18, 1408, and was easily successful. Another piece of good fortune for the new dynasty, and one which was to have very great consequences, was the beginning of the civil war in France. The King of France at the moment, Charles VI, the grandson of that King John who had been captured at Poitiers, suffered from intermittent lunacy. He was married to a most disloyal, shameless German wife, Isabella of Bavaria, and in the presence of this impotence of the monarchy of France two factors struggled for power in that country. The first was headed by the Duke of Burgundy, the cousin of the King, who had built up by inheritance and marriage an almost independent kingdom of his own in the east of France. The second was headed by the King's nephew, the Duke of Orleans. Burgundy, in 1405, had got hold of the King and of his heir, the Dauphin, who was then a boy only nine years old. At first the Orleans faction bore with this, but that did not save their chief, who was murdered by the Burgundian faction in November 1407. Orleans left a young son, who inherited the vendetta. The Orleans faction was now known as the Armagnacs, from the name of the father-in-law of the Duke, and between Orleans and Burgundy France was falling into civil war.

**Death of Henry IV.** Henry IV of England interfered. While the Armagnacs were besieging Paris in 1411, to get hold of the mad King Charles, whom the Burgundians held within the city, the King of England sent a small contingent of 2000 men to help the Burgundians to resist, stipulating as his price

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the recognition of the old Plantagenet claim to the inheritance in south-eastern France. In thus renewing the French wars and running the risk of great expenses and further unpopularity should he fail Henry was following the model of all uncertain governments—gambling upon the popularity which should follow victories abroad. It was too late for him to continue the policy himself, for he was breaking down; but it was handed on to his son. The King had one fit of epilepsy after another, and the last seized him in the spring of 1413 while he was praying in Westminster Abbey, before the shrine of St Edward. His attendants carried him into a room of the monastery, and there he died on March 20.

### HENRY V

**Opening of the Reign.** The young man who succeeded to the throne as Henry V was in his twenty-sixth year. He was known (from the town in which he had been born) as Henry of Monmouth. He inherited the bad blood and weak constitution of his father, and was of singular character—hatchet-faced, superstitious, with thin, firm lips and narrow eyes, very intelligent, and of an iron self-control. But no one yet knew, nor he himself, what he was so soon to show, his very high talents as a soldier. He had already fought in arms (when he was only sixteen) against Hotspur: he now inherited the task of fighting across the Channel.

Immediately with the new reign, within a year of its beginning, there was the usual anti-Lancastrian rising against the usurping family, mainly supported by great crowds in the capital and headed by a certain religious fanatic known as John Oldcastle. It was mixed up with the remaining religious enthusiasm of the Lollards and the dregs of the Wycliffite movement, but, large though the gathering of rebels was, the young King mastered them at once, and was free to turn to the chief business of his reign—armed interference in the civil war in France.

He had already begun negotiations for a marriage with Katharine, the daughter of the mad King Charles; on the last day of May 1414 he sent his envoys across the Channel, and on July 10 they presented the ancient claim of the Plantagenets to their territories in France. We must remember that the effect of the loss of France was still recent; the young men

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who had fought at Poitiers and who had witnessed the later breakdown of the Plantagenet claims across the Channel were still alive, and all the immediate past had retained a memory of the earlier victories and the shame of the subsequent defeats.

Henry, therefore, could expect a certain amount of public support for the dynastic experiment which, if it were to succeed, would firmly establish the new Lancastrian house. In April 1415 he summoned a Council of Peers, spiritual and lay, named his younger brother, the Duke of Bedford, Regent, and proclaimed his intention of raising an army and crossing the sea. Even at such a moment there was a further rebellion, or rather conspiracy, while the army was concentrated at Southampton and about to embark. The conspiracy had the object of putting the legitimate<sup>1</sup> heir, the young Earl of March (who was now twenty-three), on the throne.

There were present in the army two brothers (the sons of John of Gaunt's younger brother), cousins of the King, Edward, Duke of York, and Richard, who was Earl of Cambridge and who had married Mortimer's sister, who would be the rightful heir to the throne if the young Earl of March died without children. This Earl of Cambridge, the Duke of York's brother, was the head of the conspiracy, which may have been betrayed by young Mortimer himself. Cambridge and his accomplices were put to death.

**Agincourt.** Four days after, on Sunday, August 11, the transports, with an army of over 30,000 men on board and a strong siege-train of the new artillery, served by a thousand gunners, set out from Spithead. The fleet cast anchor upon the northern bank of the estuary of the Seine, just below Harfleur, then the port of the river-mouth, as Havre is to-day. Harfleur had no garrison to speak of—only 400 men gathered haphazard—and it capitulated at the end of five weeks. Henry garrisoned his capture, and determined to hold it as a second bridgehead across the Channel and blocking the Seine. His plan was to make a raid, such as his great-grandfather, Edward III, had carried out, gathering what loot he might and falling back on Calais. But he had lost nearly one-third of

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<sup>1</sup> Legitimate, be it remarked, only in strict feudal law. He inherited through the women from the *elder* brother of John of Gaunt. But as he was not a Plantagenet by male descent and name the nation might not have accepted him.

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his men from sickness in that hot summer and during the attack on Harfleur. He started out on October 8, 1415, eastward with just on 11,000 armed men, and only eight days' store of food, just enough to reach Calais by the straight road along the coast and across the estuary of the Somme. He got this force to do a very fine piece of marching—often fifteen miles a day, and on some days twenty. There had been as yet no concentration against him, but the regular crossing of the Somme at Blanchetaque, which Edward III had used before Crécy, was too strongly held for him to force it. He went up the river under heavy rain seeking a crossing, still keeping up a splendid marching-pace. This young King Henry V was showing himself a first-rate commander. On account of his speed he got ahead of the French on the farther side of the stream, and at the upper waters where the Roman road crosses the Somme at Voyennes he got over to the farther bank and turned northward at once for Calais.

The main French concentration, which was very large, was thus turned; but it still lay between Henry and the Straits of Dover. The crossing of the Somme had been on October 19. Five days later, on the evening of the 24th, the little English force was in bivouac upon the edge of a low plateau, with the village of Azincourt<sup>1</sup> about a mile off across the flat in front of them, and to the right of it glowed the camp-fires of the large French army. It was a cloudy night without a moon, and the rain still fell on the clay soil.

On the next day, October 25, 1415, the battle was joined, and the small, highly disciplined English force was completely successful. The French abandoned their first determination to await the English attack; they came forward confusedly and 'bunched,' so that the first two discharges of the Welsh long-bow threw them into complete confusion. Henry's command went forward on foot with the battle-axe and dagger, and attacked the confused, tangled mass of the feudal cavalry in front of them. The French reserve counter-attacked too late, and the English victory was complete. It was marred by a massacre of prisoners in a moment of panic, when a body of French had got as far as the baggage-train.

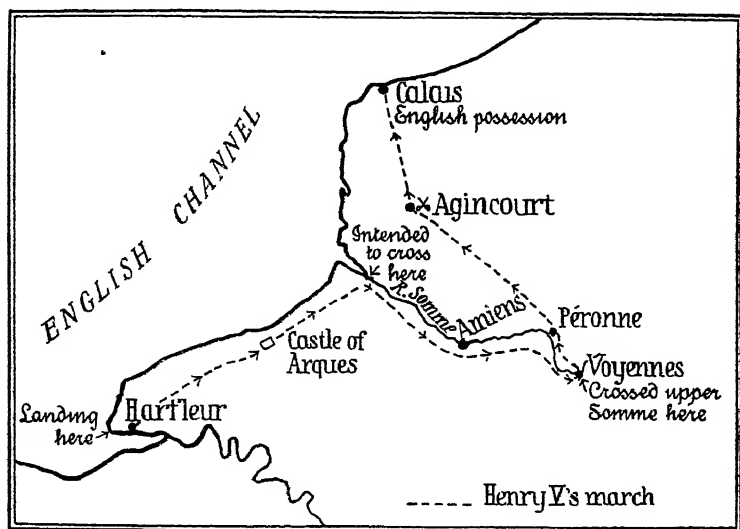
Henry's losses were comparatively few, but they included

<sup>1</sup> This is the French spelling of this French village. The English usage is 'Agincourt.' In the same way 'Blindheim' has become 'Blenheim,' etc.

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his cousin, the Duke of York, from whose brother, the Earl of Cambridge, were to descend those who would later challenge the Lancastrian house.

**The Fruit of the Victory.** There was no immediate tangible result attaching to this victory at Agincourt, save a great deal of loot by ransom from the wealthier of those who had fallen prisoner on the French side. But the moral effect was



CAMPAIGN OF AGINCOURT

Henry V lands at the mouth of the Seine, and besieges and takes Harfleur, just up river. He then marches past the Castle of Arques, near Dieppe, making for the Ford of Blanchetaque, where Edward III had crossed. Fearing it is too strongly guarded, he marches up the Somme to near Péronne, where he crosses at Voyennes. Thence he makes straight for Calais, is intercepted at Agincourt by a large French force, which he defeats, and so pursues his march to the sea.

very great: it showed that under such a leader as Henry V, and with the discipline established and the monopoly of a special weapon (the like of which no French force possessed), even a comparatively small English force would have a decisive effect as an ally to one or the other of the two contending French factions.

The civil war in France continued for three years. Burgundy captured Paris in 1418; the populace of the French capital were wholly on his side, so was the University and the Church. The Armagnac faction, with whom was the Dauphin, the heir

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to the French kingdom, fell back on Poitiers, and set up a rival government, claiming that the Burgundians had wrongful control of the old mad King. The Emperor Sigismund began to approach Henry also as an ally, and he and the English King and Burgundy met, with one unfortunate result. In the Council of Constance, which had been summoned to put an end to the Papal Schism, the English prelates supported the Emperor's candidate, and on that account the French prelates of the Armagnac faction—which represented the legitimate claim of the Dauphin—supported the other candidate, so that the Schism was confirmed and became worse than ever in its effects of lowering Papal prestige.

**The Conquest of Normandy.** All France being occupied with civil war, Normandy lay open to Henry V, who now conquered the whole province, taking town after town and castle after castle, garrisoning them and governing the place as his own. This meant a great accession of revenue and, of course, a wide territorial base from which to launch any further action. Rouen fell in January 1419, and Henry's triumph was complete.

**The Murder of Burgundy and Henry's Accession to Power in France.** Henry's hold upon Normandy depended, of course, on the French civil war continuing. He would have had no chance to hold so wide a territory, and—excellent soldier that he was—would not have attempted the impossible task, had the French factions combined and brought against him a national army—four or five times as large as his own. An attempt at reconciliation between the warring French factions had already been made in the spring of 1419, and everything seemed on the way to settlement and the ruin of Henry's plans, when even as the Duke of Burgundy came to meet the Dauphin and be reconciled, on September 10, and had reached the bridge of Montereau, on the Yonne, he was struck down with an axe and killed by those who surrounded the Dauphin. The whole Burgundian faction (which, be it remembered, held the capital, the French King, the Queen, and the Government) was maddened with rage; the Queen supported them by a false declaration that the Dauphin was not his father's son, but illegitimate. The young heir of the murdered Duke of Burgundy at once took Henry V for an ally. The old prospect of a marriage between Henry and the

## THE DECLINE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

King of France's daughter Katharine was revived; and by the end of the year 1419 all was ready for a great change.

On May 30 of the next year, 1420, Katharine of France—declared by her mother to be the only legitimate heiress of the French crown—and Henry V were married. By the treaty which followed, called the Treaty of Troyes, Henry was to be Regent of France while the mad French King lived and to succeed, as the husband of the so-called legitimate heiress of France, when her father, the mad King, should die. Henry's new Queen was crowned with great magnificence in London early in 1421, and a son was born to her, heir to Henry V and to the crown of France and England combined, on December 6 of that year.

**Death of Henry and the End of the Reign.** Though the court was held in Paris in the spring of 1422 with great splendour, the wretched health of the blood he inherited was telling on the King. Though he was only thirty-six, he had come to the end of his life. By July he was unable to concentrate sufficiently to carry on the government; he handed it over to his brother, the Duke of Bedford, and was carried back to the royal residence at Vincennes, just outside the walls of Paris. He had strength enough to appoint his other brother, Gloucester, guardian of the realm of England, and left rigid orders that Orleans, who had been captured in the wars, should be kept a prisoner. He told them to offer Burgundy the Regency of France while the newly born child was in his minority, but, should Burgundy refuse, Bedford was to govern as Regent. Henry V then died in the midst of his glory on August 21, 1422.

His father-in-law, the old mad King Charles VI of France, only survived him by a few weeks, so that the baby son whom Henry had left could be proclaimed, under the title of Henry VI of England and Henry II of France, as King of both countries.

## HENRY VI

**The Quarrel with Burgundy.** The Anglo-French realm, for the establishment of which a struggle had continued during all the Middle Ages, seemed at last to be accomplished. The baby who now ruled under the title of Henry VI of

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England and II of France would have had his capital in Paris and governed from the Scottish border to the Mediterranean had his rule in France endured. But everything turned upon close co-operation between the English Bedford—who was Regent as brother of the late King and uncle of the baby—and the French Burgundian faction. It was only as allies of that half of the French forces that the house of Lancaster could continue to hold its difficult position across the Channel.

There were many new difficulties in the situation. The great mass even of the English landed classes had by this time become English-speaking, which made them for the first time appear as foreigners upon French soil—for when the wars began they had been exactly of the same kind as the Northern French about them. Further, the resources in men of the Lancastrian army were small. It was still a well-organized force, but would never hold its own without the much larger contingents which the Burgundian French could put at its disposal. Also, living thus unnaturally overseas, the men had to be paid highly; it is true that, with the occupation of so much of Northern France, there was a large field for taxation, but if that became partially lost the financial strain would be impossible to bear. Everything, therefore, depended upon keeping in touch with Burgundy.

While Bedford was Regent in France and apparently secure there, as he had become the brother-in-law of the Duke of Burgundy, his elder brother, the Duke of Gloucester, was left Regent in England, governing with the aid of the Council. At his side his half-uncle, the illegitimate Henry Beaufort (later Bishop of Winchester), son of John of Gaunt, a man of high intelligence and tenacious character and controlling very great wealth, was a rival for power. In the summer of 1424, two years after the death of Henry V, this Duke of Gloucester, then a young man in the early thirties, married the great heiress Jacqueline of Hainault. She brought with her the greater part of the Low Countries, to which the Duke of Burgundy looked confidently as destined to be his own. He already had the mass of land to the eastern side of France and part of the shores of the North Sea. By this marriage with Jacqueline of Hainault Burgundy's chance of joining up his dominions and making one great realm from the North Sea to Switzerland was destroyed. The result was a quarrel with Burgundy

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from 1425 onward, which was at last to prove fatal to the Lancastrian plans.

The Dauphin, Charles of Valois, had continued to assert his claim, and had himself crowned King at Chartres. There was as yet no reconciliation between Burgundy and the Dauphin, but henceforward Burgundy remained neutral, and Bedford had to depend upon his own comparatively small English forces. Therefore the loss of France was inevitable; it followed necessarily upon Gloucester's fatal marriage, which he had backed up by sending forces to occupy as garrison his wife's Belgian inheritance.

By 1426 Burgundy had begun actively attempting to hold the Netherland districts of Jacqueline's inheritance against Gloucester; and the Plantagenet Government, holding a council in Paris, tried to retrieve the situation by crossing the Loire and attacking the Dauphin in the territory which he held south of that river, so as to make the little child Henry VI of England and II of France King over all France, instead of only the North, which he now held. The forces of the Dauphin, who was the true legitimate King of France (though it was still pretended that he was a bastard), held Orleans, and it was impossible for the Plantagenet forces to act south of the river until the large walled town of Orleans should be taken. By the autumn of 1428 the town of Orleans was besieged by the Plantagenet forces, who were commanded by the Earl of Salisbury, a Montagu, forty years of age and with a long experience of the wars. He had commanded under Henry V ever since the beginning of these campaigns.

**The Siege of Orleans. Joan of Arc.** An attempt to carry Orleans by assault failed, and Salisbury was killed in the effort. He was succeeded in the command by William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, a man of inferior military talent. Having failed to carry Orleans by assault, Suffolk tried to reduce it by famine; but the fatal weakness of the Plantagenets in this campaign, ever since their quarrel with Burgundy, began to appear—he had not enough men. He put up a number of little block-houses in a circle round the city, but the gaps between them were too wide, and the English investing force was not numerous enough to prevent occasional raids bringing reinforcements of men and food into the city. However, it suffered heavily from increasing scarcity, and offered to sur-

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render, *if the surrender might be made to the Duke of Burgundy*, during the Lent of 1429. Bedford refused this offer, and just at that moment there appeared at the court of the Dauphin a young girl of seventeen who was to have a magical effect upon the campaign.

Her name was Joan. Her family, by name Arc, were farmers upon the upper Meuse at Domrémy, in territory just outside the Duke of Burgundy's possessions, and in a district which acknowledged the rule of the Dauphin. She claimed that she had heard heavenly voices urging her to go to seek the Dauphin at his court, and have him crowned King at Rheims, because Rheims was the place where the Kings of France were always crowned, and only after their coronation in the cathedral there was their authority fully recognized.

With great difficulty she persuaded the local governor of the district where she had been born to support her doubtfully, and he had sent her across country to the Dauphin's court. With further difficulty did she impose herself upon the surroundings of the Dauphin, but what really turned the scale in her favour was the feeling which began to spread among the Dauphin's armed forces that she had a supernatural mission. She was allowed to appear with the army, and her advice was taken when she asked to be allowed to relieve the siege of Orleans.

This supernatural enthusiasm which Joan had begun to inspire in the forces of the Valois gave rise to a corresponding supernatural dread in the forces of the Plantagenet: she broke the siege ring, and entered Orleans on May 8, 1429.

The siege of Orleans was at an end, but Suffolk tried to hold on to the line of the river Loire, but failed, under the new enthusiasm which Joan of Arc inspired in the Dauphin's troops. The strong posts along the river were captured, and Suffolk himself was taken prisoner.

He was succeeded in the command by Talbot, a very great soldier, a man from the Welsh Marches, eagle-faced, tall, spare, and already in middle age—destined to be the most famous commander of all these wars. On June 18 Joan of Arc, having now recovered the whole line of the Loire, won a battle at Patay, well to the north of the river, but the Plantagenet hold on Northern France was not yet shaken, and the towns between the Loire and Rheims were still in allegiance to the child-King at Paris. Nevertheless Joan of Arc led the Dauphin through

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this hostile country to Rheims, and had him crowned there under the title of Charles VII on July 17, 1429.

**Capture and Death of Joan.** Joan of Arc now said that her mission was over; the voices of the saints whom she had heard in her native village had given her no mission beyond that of meeting the King and getting him crowned, which was to be the sign that victory would follow; but though the great men in the Dauphin's party ridiculed her, they saw how useful she had been in continuing to inspire the soldiery. The Dauphin was more sympathetic with her, but not enthusiastically so; she was not given permission to return home as she desired, but was forced, though no longer supported by the feeling that her mission was still divine, to go on leading the Dauphin's men in the wars. But the Burgundian faction was still strong, and when Joan was captured outside Compiègne the clergy of that faction, including the University of Paris and many of the northern prelates, helped the Plantagenet power to destroy her. She was tried, condemned to death as a heretic and a witch, and burned alive at Rouen on May 30, 1431. No serious effort was made by the Dauphin's party to ransom her in the interval, for it was thought that the superstition she had aroused in the forces had done its work, and that therefore there was no need to support her further.

At the end of that year, 1431, by way of reply to the crowning of the Dauphin at Rheims, little Henry VI was crowned in Paris as King of England and France, on December 17. Eighteen months later, in May 1433, a second grave blunder was committed which finally ruined the Plantagenet power beyond the Channel. Bedford, though much wiser than his brother Gloucester, having lost his wife, the sister of Burgundy, married, like his brother, an heiress whose lands lay so that they interfered with the Burgundian plan of making a united realm on the east. This heiress was Jacquetta of Luxembourg. The blow to Burgundy was direct, and he would not forgive. Henry Beaufort, the great prelate and Cardinal of Winchester, tried to reconcile the two men at Saint-Omer, but he failed—Burgundy refused to speak to Bedford. He hesitated as yet to break completely with the Plantagenets because he had sworn an oath of alliance, but before the end of 1435 Burgundy and the legitimate King of France, Charles, were in alliance, Bedford having died and been buried in Rouen Cathedral.

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**The Rapid Loss of France.** After this the breakdown of the Plantagenet power in France went on continuously. One garrison after another fell, the area from which taxation could be levied to support the Plantagenet cause grew less and less, the financial strain increased, a demand for peace grew up in England, though it went side by side with bitter mortification at the extinction of all the glory which had been won by Henry V not much more than twenty years before. Cardinal Beaufort put himself at the head of this movement, but the French King refused to make peace on terms, feeling that the tide was flowing strongly in his favour. By 1440 it was clear that there was no further chance for the dream of a complete Anglo-French kingdom under one Plantagenet king at Paris. The Duke of Orleans, kept a prisoner ever since Agincourt, was surrendered, and in 1444 a two-years armistice was arranged in connection with the marriage of Henry Plantagenet, the young English King. The marriage was to be one with Margaret of Anjou, who was niece of King Charles of France (and more like a daughter than a niece, being closely connected with the court), and the idea was that perhaps through this marriage Normandy at least might be retained. That the English Crown should keep Normandy was a point on which there was really strong public feeling in England—but, unfortunately for the Plantagenet, even this royal marriage did not suffice to save that remainder of the old Plantagenet possessions overseas.

**The Final Loss of Normandy : Formigny.** On July 17, 1449, the twentieth anniversary of his crowning at Rheims, Charles VII held a council in which it was decided to break the truce. He had an overwhelming force of artillery (an arm which the French had recently developed on a large scale), and he advanced into Normandy. By November 4, 1449, he had taken the castle of Rouen and had provoked risings through the province against the English garrisons. The Duke of Somerset (the nephew of Cardinal Beaufort) was in command. He fell back on Caen, where a small reinforcement reached him from England; but their *moral* was very poor, as the whole country was in a violent state of disgust and anger at what was happening abroad. This new English force, marching towards Caen, was met at Formigny on April 15, and there wiped out—and with this battle of Formigny the campaign can be said to end. But the town itself was besieged, and



THE SECOND LOSS OF NORTHERN FRANCE

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Somerset himself surrendered to Charles in person in June 1450. Cherbourg was taken on August 12, 1450. Nothing remained to the Plantagenets beyond the seas save a remnant of the garrisons in the south, on the lower Dordogne and Garonne, and these within two years were to be lost also. In the last battle, at Castillon, the great Talbot himself was killed.

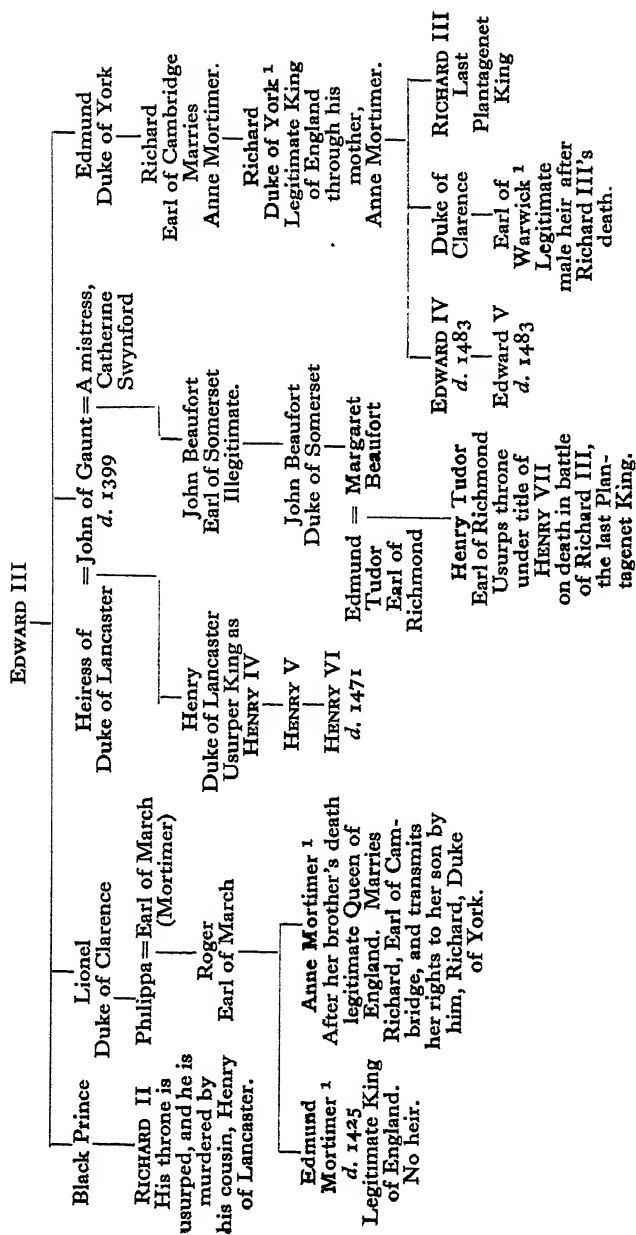
**Richard of York lands from Ireland.** The defeats in France, the popular anger following upon them, the disaffection caused by the enormous expenses following upon a reduced field for taxation, gave the first opportunity for seriously challenging the usurping dynasty. This opportunity was taken by Richard, Duke of York, a man of some forty years of age, who represented the remnant of English power in Ireland. There was as yet no heir to Henry VI, for no child had been born of his marriage with the niece of the French King, and as the young King of England had inherited the taint of his grandfather, Charles VI of France, and, though gentle and even holy in character, was evidently weak-minded, it was believed that no heir would be born. Cardinal Beaufort was dead, and so was the Duke of Gloucester. Rumours were flying everywhere of the attack that was coming upon the Throne. There had already been a popular rebellion in the south under one Jack Cade. In the midst of all this, with no one knowing what was to follow, Richard, Duke of York, landed suddenly from Ireland.

He was the son of that Earl of Cambridge who had been executed before the campaign of Agincourt and of Anne Mortimer, the true heiress to the crown of England. He was a full Plantagenet, and he was prepared in due time to claim the throne.

## THE WARS OF THE ROSES

**The Change.** The year 1450 is a convenient date at which to consider the great change that was passing over Christendom. For a century past the medieval civilization had been breaking up, and of the forces which had broken it up the most important had been the Black Death. The nature of the misfortune—for it was a misfortune—is often misread, because in this break-up of the medieval civilization new things began to appear which have grown to be things we are

THE CONFUSION DUE TO THE USURPATION OF THE THRONE BY HENRY,  
DUKE OF LANCASTER



1 Those through whom legitimate inheritance of the crown was claimed, Clarence being older than John of Gaunt.

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now fully familiar with—what is called the modern world was beginning. It was the moment in which printing appears, in which artillery is used on a large scale and effectively for the first time; in sculpture and in painting there was a new spirit which went on until our own time—it was that spirit which had been working for a century in Italy and was called in this department that of the Renaissance; it was the spirit which abandoned convention and returned to the old classical ideal of representing men and things in art after the fashion of the original in nature. It was also the time when distant voyages, and especially those of the Portuguese down the coasts of Africa and across the Atlantic, began to impress the imagination of Europe. The critical examination of documents had begun; the capture of Constantinople by the Turks put an end to the Eastern Empire and dispersed manuscripts and scholars throughout the West. But the real change was a spiritual one, which this mass of material change did not cause, but followed; and this spiritual change was one of dissolution in the structure of Christendom. The sense of unity throughout Christendom was weakening, and the weakening was increased by the decline in prestige of the Papacy, which was the symbol of Christian unity.

**The Spiritual Decline of the Papacy.** After the Papacy had been settled in France for seventy years it had gone back to its original seat at Rome, but the Great Schism had set up rival Popes; councils of bishops from all over Europe were called, and took on an authority which seemed superior to that of the uncertain Popes. When the Schism was ended and one universally accepted Pope remained at the head of the Church for a hundred years on, until the outbreak of the Reformation, the Papacy was thus united again; but it did not recover the moral position it had held in the true Middle Ages.

The Popes now regarded themselves not only as heads of the Church, but as Italian princes; they took part as rivals or equals in the intrigues and wars of their fellow-princes, the heads of the new states which were everywhere becoming more and more separate. Though it was to be a long time yet before Christendom should break up into hostile and independent nations, still the lines which this change was to follow had already appeared. Most important of all was the disaffection growing among the laity towards the official Church. The official Church had, to repeat a metaphor already used,

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crystallized. Its workings had lost the vitality and elasticity of an earlier time. There was by now all over Christendom a great, complicated financial machine which gathered clerical fines and dues and endowments, rents (which the laity had to provide), and fees for legal cases in Church courts. And the Church courts were everywhere powerful, interfering with every part of life; they became increasingly unpopular and were felt to be more and more oppressive.

There were local outbreaks of violent protest: there had been the Wycliffite movement in England; there followed the far greater Hussite movement in the centre of Europe, which was also in great measure a rising of the Slavs against the Germans; there was a growing scepticism in the universities, and a growing ill-ease in the wealthy official part of the Church against what was felt to be an increasing menace. There was an almost permanently established system of repression, and though no great heretical movement swept Europe such as had threatened more than once the life of the Middle Ages, and such as in earlier times had swamped more than half Christendom with a wave of Mohammedanism, yet the air of the time was fuller of doubt, contempt, and hatred for the established forms of the endowed Church than ever it had been before.

**Beginning of the Wars of the Roses.** In England this period just after the middle of the fifteenth century was one of political confusion in which the unity and strength of the nation declined. Civil war broke out between two factions, the members of which were equally divided into separate camps: for men, as is always the case in such conflicts, would often change from one side to the other. Yet the two factions—to be called York and Lancaster—stood, as a whole, for two main principles: the defence of the Lancastrian usurpation on the one side, and the attempt on the other to undo that usurpation and to refound a national monarchy which all should agree to be legitimate.

This conflict is called the Wars of the Roses from a story that at its origin the champions of the Lancastrians took the red rose for their symbol and their opponents a white rose. It is also called the struggle between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists, because Richard, Duke of York, and after his death his son Edward, who became Edward IV, were the leaders of the opposition to the Lancastrian house.

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This opposition to the Lancastrian house, an opposition which stood for legitimacy and proposed to restore the right Plantagenet line, could not put forward a candidate universally admitted to have superior right over poor Henry VI. The original Duke of York, Edmund, brother of John of Gaunt and son of Edward III, had been the younger son, and John of Gaunt, from whom the Lancastrians descended, the elder one. Henry VI was the great-grandson of John of Gaunt in direct descent from father to son, and Richard, Duke of York, the grandson in direct descent from Edmund. He was of the younger branch, and as such had no claim against the reigning King. But his mother had been that Anne Mortimer who was the legitimate heiress to the English throne. That was his true legal claim. On the other hand, the legal claim weighed little against the strong English feeling that a Plantagenet ought to rule and the dislike of a change of dynasty. What really supported Richard, Duke of York, in his gradual advance, until he actually made a bid for the throne, was the undying feeling throughout the nation that the Lancastrian house had begun by usurpation, and usurpation under the basest conditions. The house was unpopular and transient, and the vivid glory of Henry V's victories and political achievements did not permanently affect that unpopularity. It was now doubly unpopular through the barrenness of the French Queen, Margaret of Anjou, and the association with her name of the loss of the French provinces and the humiliation of the recent defeats, while the fact that King Henry VI was always weak-minded and occasionally actually insane—a political cipher—was a further weakening of the Lancastrian cause.

**Strength of the Two Parties.** If we estimate the factors of strength on either side we find on the side of Richard, Duke of York, his own capacity and vigour, contrasted with the condition of the King, and the fact that he stood in the centre of a group of very wealthy families, bound together by the Neville connection. Of the six children of Ralph Neville (whose family had hitherto been Lancastrian and whose wife was a Beaufort, one of the legitimized Lancastrians), one sister had married the Duke of York, another the Duke of Norfolk, while the four brothers were the peers Salisbury, Fauconberg, Abergavenny, and Latimer. After 1452 all this mass of wealth and political power was ready to fight for York. The Yorkist

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side also had the accidental advantage of better generalship: York himself was a good soldier, but his son, who was later Edward IV, turned out in his day to be the best soldier of the time. In favour of the Lancastrian side was the effect of time (the dynasty had now been established for over half a century), the surviving memory of Henry V's victories, the support of a majority of the great landed houses with their armed tenantry, and the vigour and capacity of the Queen. But most important was the fact that Henry VI was the anointed King. It was this which caused hesitation and delay in the Yorkist camp before they actually made an attack upon the Crown.

**Scheme of the Wars of the Roses.** The Wars of the Roses, like the Hundred Years War, must not be regarded as a continuous struggle. There were three distinct and short phases, with long intervals between.

(1) The campaign of Towton—that is, the operations leading up to the decisive battle of Towton, which battle had the result of putting Richard of York's son Edward upon the throne as Edward IV. He loses this position through an imprudent marriage, is turned out, but comes back to fight

(2) The campaign of Barnet and Tewkesbury, which latter action is decisive and puts Edward back upon the throne. After Edward's death his brother Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, becomes King as Richard III, but

(3) Henry Tudor, indirectly representing the Lancastrian line, invades England and wins against Richard the battle of Bosworth, in which Richard is killed, the Plantagenet line comes to an end, and the Tudor dynasty begins.

These three separate campaigns stand wide apart. That of Towton fills the eighteen months from the autumn of 1459 to the spring of 1461. That of Barnet and Tewkesbury comes ten years later, and fills a few weeks in 1471. That of Bosworth, fourteen years later again, fills a few weeks in 1485.

The Wars of the Roses are therefore three quite distinct and well-separated campaigns, each quite short in duration, and divided by intervals of ten and fourteen years.

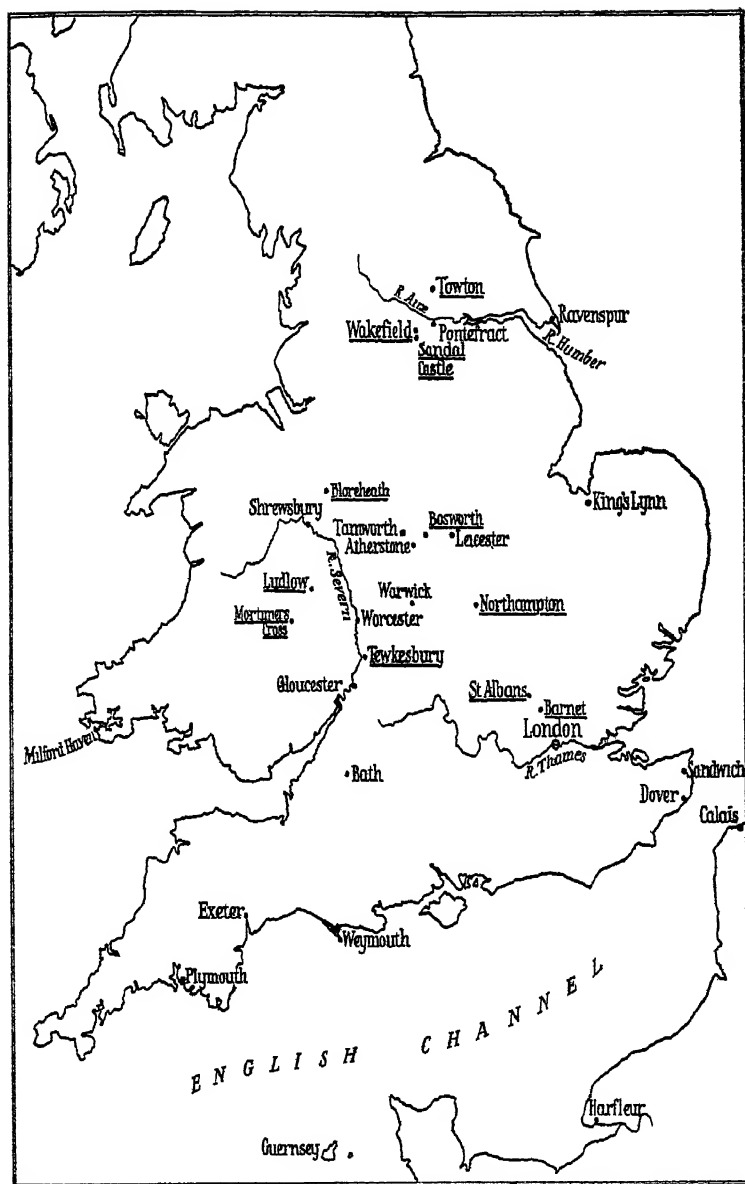
**The Preliminaries of the Wars.** After Richard, Duke of York, had landed from Ireland and marched on London the last garrison in France (except that of Calais) surrendered. Bordeaux was lost after a desperate siege, and at much the

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same time, in 1453, King Henry VI fell into complete imbecility. On the other hand, the Queen bore a son, and the Lancastrian dynasty now for the first time had an heir. Nevertheless York was made Regent and declared "Protector and Defender of the Realm." He spent the year 1454 in putting his supporters, the Neville connection, into key posts; he gave the governorship of Calais to his nephew the Earl of Warwick—a most capable young man of twenty-six years. But King Henry VI recovered at the end of the year, and the Queen called a Council from which York was excluded, and all the Nevilles, thus challenging the Yorkist power. York took up arms against her, and in what was rather a skirmish than a battle proper at St Albans (May 22, 1455), generally called the first battle of St Albans, the first blood was shed. It was a ridiculous affair with less than a hundred casualties, merely street-fighting against barricades, but young Warwick distinguished himself in it. Somerset (Edmund Beaufort, grandson of John of Gaunt in the illegitimate branch), the chief supporter of the Lancastrian court, was killed, and, most important point of all, the person of the King was captured—Henry VI was the prisoner of the Yorkists.

In 1458 there was a false reconciliation in St Paul's Cathedral, in London, but the Nevilles and York knew that the Queen would attempt to regain full power, and they prepared for civil war on a serious scale. During the summer of 1459 nothing happened, but in the autumn of that year, in September, the campaign of Towton opens.

**The Campaign of Towton : the First Fighting.** The old Earl of Salisbury, father of young Warwick and head of the Nevilles, joined York in the West, near Ludlow, whither Warwick also came over from Calais. He had beaten off, at Bloreheath, in Staffordshire (September 23, 1459), those who attempted to intercept him as he marched westward, and so effected his junction with York and his son Warwick. The Yorkists lay ready for battle close to Ludlow, but the Queen's party had brought up much larger forces. There followed rather a cannonade than an action, and Warwick's inferior Yorkist body, from which there had already been desertions, could not stand. Young Warwick fled, accompanied by Edward, the son of the Duke of York, who was still only seventeen, but tall, handsome, very brave.



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The Duke of York himself fled to Ireland. The young men took boat on the Welsh coast, and after an astonishing and courageous adventure, sailing round Land's End and up the Channel, reached Calais and prepared to hold it against the King. The next year, 1460, Warwick, leaving Calais at Whitsuntide, seized Sandwich, to serve as his bridgehead on the other side of the water, and then landed himself with young Edward, York's son, and a small force of 2000 men on June 26.

It is important to note that a Papal Legate accompanied the Yorkist force, and the Archbishop of Canterbury joined it. Large bodies joined them in Kent; they occupied London (though the Tower was still held by the Queen). The campaign went rapidly. The royal army stood just outside and south of the town of Northampton; it was attacked by Warwick and young Edward on July 10, 1460, and went to pieces, many of the men on the Lancastrian side helping the Yorkists over the earthworks. The whole thing was over in half an hour, and the casualties were less than three hundred.

It was in this battle of Northampton that young Edward distinguished himself for the first time, and the chances for distinction in such a combat were small. Warwick and young Edward took the defeated King up to London, received the submission of the town, and took over the government, but still in Henry's name. This was in the weeks after the battle.

In less than two months, on September 2, 1460, the Duke of York had come over again from Ireland, and on October 9 he publicly announced his claim to be the legitimate King of England. But a compromise was made—Henry was to remain King during his life, and York to succeed him. Margaret of Anjou's son, the heir to Henry, a child of seven, was passed over.

The Queen, of course, had nothing to do with this compromise; she remained in the North, gathering large forces and preparing to continue the struggle. The Duke of York went off to a castle of his own at Sandal, near Wakefield, to keep Christmas. There he was suddenly surrounded by a body of Lancastrians attached to the Queen, and killed on December 30, and nearly all the men round him were put to the sword. It was this comparatively small incident—but one of great importance through the death of the claimant to the throne—which began the long series of murders, the vendetta of the Wars of the Roses, which makes them a sort of shambles

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in which the great names of the old English families appear one after the other as murderers or murdered. Salisbury, the head of the Nevilles, was beheaded; young Rutland was stabbed to death by Lord Clifford himself, to whom he had surrendered; and York's head, with a crown of gold paper set on it in mockery, was put up on a pike over one of the gates of York.<sup>1</sup>

The great Lancastrian army gathered by the Queen began marching south; it surprised a body which Warwick had drawn up at St Albans to cover the castle (the second battle of St Albans, February 17, 1461), recovered the person of poor Henry VI, and occupied London. But meanwhile young Edward, who now, since his father's death, was Duke of York and head of the party, lay in the West, and was about to show the military talent which made him King.

**Appearance of the Tudors.** There was in the West, on the Marches of Wales, at that time a man with a Welsh name whose father had been of Welsh origin, a certain Owen Tudor or Tyddr, upon whom the Queen relied to uphold the Lancastrian cause in that part of the country. We do not know his exact age; he was probably fifty or a little over. His interest lies in this, that he had been the paramour of, and, as many people said (though there was no proof), secretly wedded to, Henry V's widow, formerly the Princess Katharine of France. He had occupied the position of a sort of steward or upper groom in her household, and the connection was scandalous; but the children born of it had been brought up with their half-brother, Henry VI, in his childhood, and Henry had given them titles and wealth. It was this family of Tudors which came, in less than twenty-five years, to be Kings of England!

**Battles of Mortimer's Cross and Towton.** Young Edward (now Duke of York) came up with Owen Tudor at Mortimer's Cross, near Wigmore, in the Welsh Marches, on Candlemas, February 3, 1461. He won a complete victory, and captured Owen Tudor, whom he murdered with sundry other of the leaders, but Owen's son, young Jasper Tudor, got away. The two young men, Edward and Warwick—Warwick being the elder by some eleven years, for Edward was nineteen and Warwick just upon thirty—were now full of that feeling of vendetta which the murders upon either side had caused. They occupied

<sup>1</sup> This massacre, in which a younger son of York also perished, is often improperly called the battle of Wakefield.

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London, the populace was with them, and on March 4, 1461, young Edward was proclaimed and crowned at Westminster under the title of Edward IV.

But the Lancastrian army was still in existence. It had been withdrawn from near London; Warwick and Edward marched after it with great rapidity—200 miles were covered in a fortnight, a pace which speaks well for the discipline of the young King's forces and of his power of command. The passage of the river Aire was forced on March 28, 1461. The Lancastrian army had taken up a position on Towton Heath, six miles north of the stream, near the little village of Saxton. The forces were very large, the Lancastrian somewhat the greater; and the total number engaged must have been well over 100,000. On Palm Sunday, March 29, 1461, in a violent snowstorm driving northward into the faces of the Lancastrians, their army broke. We know little of the details of the conflict, but it was a complete victory for Edward. The usual batch of murders followed it, something like fifty of the chief men on the Lancastrian side being killed in cold blood after the battle. The Queen had gone away, taking the unfortunate King Henry VI with her, and Edward went back south to reign. So ended the first campaign: the campaign of Towton.

### EDWARD IV

**The Woodville Marriage.** The young King, having everything in his favour, wrecked himself temporarily by an imprudent marriage—one more of that series of marriages which were of such effect upon politics at this period. Jacquetta of Luxembourg, the heiress whose marriage with Bedford had ruined the position of the Plantagenets in France years before, was still alive, and had married one of the English landed gentry, Richard Woodville, a man not of the wealthiest rank. By this marriage she had had a daughter Elizabeth, who had married Sir John Grey—now dead. This widow, Elizabeth Woodville, was a very handsome woman, as Edward himself was a very handsome young man. They were secretly married in May 1464, Edward being at this moment twenty-two and Elizabeth Woodville perhaps five years older. (She is always called Woodville, to emphasize the nature of the marriage, though her real name at this time, of course, was Grey.)

## THE DECLINE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The marriage gave great offence to all the Neville connection, who were the mainstay of the Yorkist party. Warwick, who was managing the kingdom, had been planning an important foreign royal marriage for Edward, by way of cementing the alliance with France—he had not been consulted, and the Nevilles all felt they were flouted. Aristocratic rebellions against Edward began to break out within four years of the marriage, inspired by the Nevilles, and in one of these the new Queen's father and brother were caught and put to death, and Warwick found himself more and more the master of the country, even keeping the King a sort of prisoner at one moment. In 1470 Warwick definitely declared himself the enemy of Edward IV. Edward's younger brother Clarence had married Warwick's daughter, and Clarence joined with Warwick, and together they fled to France, determined to restore the house of Lancaster. They arranged that the heir to Henry VI should marry another daughter of Warwick's, and a sort of political chaos followed. Clarence, who had hoped to be made King by Warwick (he would have declared his brother illegitimate for the purpose), immediately changed sides, though he still openly supported the Nevilles; Warwick's own brother (whom Edward still trusted) all but captured that King by treason, and at the end of the turmoil Edward found himself without supporters and fled; but his soldierly courage, rapidity, and skill still served him. He seized three ships at King's Lynn, and crossed the North Sea, while Warwick came back with the Queen to London, took poor Henry out of the Tower (where he had been), solemnly crowned him again, and turned Edward's men out of their offices.

**The Campaign of Barnet and Tewkesbury.** Edward abroad went to the court of the Duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold, and Burgundy gave him some help, though not much: he acted as he did mainly from personal antagonism to Warwick. The sums thus advanced to Edward enabled him to hire about 2000 men early in the year 1471. He had probably heard that Clarence was thinking of betraying Warwick. He lost no time, sailed back across the North Sea, and landed in the mouth of the Humber at Ravenspur<sup>1</sup> (where Henry of Lancaster had landed a long lifetime ago), on March 14, 1471.

<sup>1</sup> This port is no longer on the map; it was just at the hook of land, called Holderness, in the estuary of the Humber, and has disappeared through the encroachments of the sea.

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Clarence, who had been sent by Warwick to intercept his brother Edward, betrayed Warwick and joined his brother. So far Edward had not continued his title of King; he even declared that he was not trying to recover the throne, hoping thereby, presumably, to increase the number of those who would support him. Clarence and Edward marched on London, and appeared before the walls on April 11 (Maundy Thursday): they occupied the town, put King Henry into the Tower, and Edward found in the capital his own wife Elizabeth, who had been in sanctuary, with her baby son, born during her husband's exile. Meanwhile Warwick was marching on London, and three days later, on Easter Sunday, April 14, after Edward had reached the capital, Warwick had got as far as Barnet—within a long day's march of London. Edward's army was small, but again very well handled. We have nothing but confused and most contradictory accounts of the battle, but it was a complete victory for Edward, and Warwick was killed, as was his brother.

The Lancastrian armies, however, were not eliminated; the Queen, Margaret of Anjou, was indefatigable. She landed at Weymouth the day before the battle of Barnet was fought, on Easter Eve, with her son, the Lancastrian heir (who was now seventeen years old), and marched straight north up the Severn, where she hoped to effect a junction with Jasper Tudor, Owen's son, who, it will be remembered, had saved his life after the battle of Mortimer's Cross. Edward marched west to intercept the Queen, but her army slipped past him, and when he had got to Gloucester it was already north of that town. This was on May 1, 1471, a Wednesday.

In the very fine marching that followed Edward, though going along the ridge of the Cotswolds, outmarched the Queen's forces in the vale below, and so caught them up just as they reached Tewkesbury, and lay before it exhausted after such an effort. They had covered forty miles in some thirty-six hours, yet Edward, who had had the harder task, being off the high road, had his troops better in hand and fresher when he arrived on the evening of Friday, May 3, and was ready for action next day.

On that morrow, Saturday, May 4, there was fought, in the field south of Tewkesbury town, the decisive battle of Tewkesbury. The Queen's entrenchments were carried; she herself fell a prisoner into the hands of Edward, and the Lancastrian

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chiefs were either killed in action or murdered. The last male Beaufort, the Duke of Somerset, was among those murdered, and the young heir to Henry VI was killed in the abbey itself, perhaps in the very presence of Edward.

Tewkesbury seemed to be the end of all the Lancastrian hopes. The courageous Queen, who had maintained the cause so long, was later ransomed by the King of France, Louis XI, but there was no one left in whom the Lancastrian claim could legitimately centre.

**The Last Twelve Years of Edward.** From 1471 to 1483 Edward IV ruled in peace and with great success as undisputed monarch—an undisputed monarch whose security was based on the crime of Henry's assassination. Clarence was put to death as a nuisance, for he was still quarrelling in 1478, and for some years the country was calm. There was no foreign war, no great strain for money, and therefore no necessity for summoning a Parliament; only one short Parliament was summoned, in 1478.

King Edward IV made an intelligent use of foreign trade, was economical and strict in his accounts, and could carry on without dependence upon the richer classes, who always took the opportunity when Parliaments were summoned to interfere with the government. He was helped by regular payments from Louis XI of France, who thus purchased the neutrality of England during the struggle for the unification of the French realm—but, indeed, Edward was only too glad to avoid Continental complications. The revenue from the Customs was now part of the regular income of the King, and a subsidy upon wool also.

During these twelve years therefore Edward presented a typical example of a Renaissance king—absolute in power—and he founded, after the violent revolutions of the last twenty years, that tradition of centralized rule which went on unbroken for more than a hundred and fifty years. The legitimate Plantagenet dynasty would have been secure had Edward lived; and Edward would have lived had he been able to control his appetites. But he did not control them; he grew debauched, and the strong, friendly, and soldierly man which he had once been thus condemned himself to an early death. Edward IV died just before reaching his forty-first birthday, on April 9, 1483, and, dying so young, left his heir a child.

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### EDWARD V

**Henry Tudor.** Edward IV left two young sons, Edward and Richard, the eldest of whom was not yet thirteen, the youngest eleven. Edward therefore, known as Edward V, was now the legitimate King. That Edward had not lived longer and given time for those boys to grow up and continue the dynasty was the cause of what followed.

There was, as we have seen, no legitimate leader of the Lancastrian faction left; there was no legitimate male connected with the house, no direct descendant of John of Gaunt and the royal blood upon that side.

But the Lancastrian party, with its inheritance of former power and its bitter desire for revenge for so many murders and massacres, survived. The man who now claimed to lead it was the son of Edmund Tudor. He was Henry Tudor by name, Earl of Richmond by title, and the grandson of that steward or groom whom Henry V's widow had taken for a paramour.

As a Tudor Richmond had, of course, no sort of claim at all, but Edmund, his father, had married one of the Beauforts, Margaret, and through her, though she was only a Beaufort—that is, one of the legitimized bastard branches—Henry Tudor based such poor claim as he had to lead the Lancastrian party.

He was now—1483—a young man in the mid-twenties; he had been born at the beginning of 1457, and was between twenty-five and twenty-six. He was secretive, sly, very tenacious, unscrupulous, nothing of a fighter, but an intriguer of high talent: and at this moment he was on the Continent, watching affairs in England and prepared to take the first opportunity offered to him.

**Richard, Duke of Gloucester.** Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the younger brother of the late King, Edward IV, was tempted to seize the throne in his turn. The Woodvilles, with full influence over the boy-King Edward V, were against him, but Richard had on his side the tradition that the dead King's brother should be the Protector of the Realm during a minority, and on this he worked.

Declared Protector Richard was. He promised that his little nephew should be crowned at midsummer of that same year, 1483; he terrorized his enemies by executing the supposed head of a conspiracy against him, Hastings, without trial; and

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rumours were revived, almost certainly by Richard's initiative, that Edward IV himself had been illegitimate and that he, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, alone had a true claim to the throne. At the same time another rumour was started that the marriage of Edward with Elizabeth Woodville had not been canonical on account of her previous engagement to another, so that in any case little Edward V could not be the true King.

A petition was got up—a Parliament had been summoned—that Richard should take the throne as his right. He seized Westminster Abbey on June 26, 1483, four days after the date on which he had promised that his little nephew should be crowned, and on July 6 he himself was crowned, under the title of Richard III.

His two boy nephews, Edward V and his little brother, Richard, were imprisoned in the Tower. Whether they were murdered or no, or whether, if one were murdered, the other escaped, will never be certainly known. It seems to have been generally believed by contemporaries that Richard had had them both killed. Two hundred years later the skeletons of two lads of about such an age were found under a staircase in the Tower during some repairs that were being made, and that is the only doubtful evidence we have at our disposal. At any rate, they disappeared.

There is no doubt that a very strong animosity against Richard had arisen, outside London at least, from the moment of his accession. How widespread it was we cannot now tell, for after the fall of the Plantagenets the whole weight of government influence was used for generations to represent Richard as especially monstrous, and as a tyrant detested by the English people. This he certainly was not; the English people would at any rate have preferred a Plantagenet to a man of base origin and an upstart such as was this Henry Tudor, the only Lancastrian claimant in the field; but if there was no positive force in favour of Henry Tudor's schemes there was a strong negative force in the anger which Richard had aroused by his seizure of the throne and the disappearance of the two Princes.

**Henry Tudor's First Effort.** Henry Tudor's first effort was made in 1484. There was a rising in the south against Richard, Henry was proclaimed at Exeter, but the movement failed, and though the young man had just touched at Plymouth, he fled back again to Brittany in January 1484. Richard sought

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to confirm his power by great confiscations of land after this movement, and by imposing a general oath of allegiance, but to this policy there was a curious exception which was a false step on the King's part. Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry Tudor, now a widow, had married Lord Stanley, the head of the great Stanley clan in the North, and from his marriage obviously on the Lancastrian side. Richard thought he could buy Stanley's support by making an exception in his case and sparing his wife's inheritance; he allowed Margaret Beaufort's lands to be held undisputed by Stanley.

But the effect of the act was the opposite of what was intended; it gave Stanley the idea that Richard was weakening, and that he might safely follow his natural inclination to support his stepson. Further to strengthen himself, Richard tried to marry his own niece, Elizabeth, the daughter of the late King, Edward IV. Richard's own son and heir died, and he declared John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, his heir—another step which weakened him, for the claim was very doubtful and involved. John de la Pole was the grandson of York through his mother, Elizabeth; he therefore certainly had a far better claim in blood than Henry Tudor, but it would have been a strange substitution to find a De la Pole on the throne of England. However, Richard might marry again, and have an heir, so the temporary choice of Pole as his heir was neither decisive nor even, perhaps, important.

**Henry Tudor's Second Effort.** These various elements of weakness in Richard's position were formidable in combination, and by the summer of 1485, eighteen months after his first attempt, Henry Tudor thought the moment had come to make another trial of his fortunes. He had gathered a force of about 4000 Frenchmen, paid with money borrowed in France—mostly, it would seem, Bretons and Normans. He sailed from Harfleur on August 1, 1485, and, after a week at sea, came into Milford Haven, where he landed with his Frenchmen, on the 7th of the month.

**The Campaign and Battle of Bosworth.** Henry had wisely chosen Wales as his point of entry, reckoning upon the fellow-feeling of the Welsh for a Tudor (his grandfather, the paramour of Queen Katharine, came from a Welsh family in the Snowdon district which had formerly been stewards to the Bishop of Bangor, and the name Tudor is Welsh).

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Henry set up side by side with the royal standard his own personal standard—the Welsh dragon of the Pendragons; and he perhaps doubled his forces by the addition to them of irregular Welsh contingents, though these were not trained and consequently of no great military value; they swelled his little French army. With now perhaps 10,000 men he reached the Severn at Shrewsbury, where he got no more than another 500; except these and a handful of exiled nobles there was no one in Henry Tudor's force who could speak English.

Henry, however, had had plenty of promises of support, and was prepared to risk the ordeal of battle. Richard had gathered, to meet the invasion, a force double the size of Henry's, and it was more wholly national, whereas Henry's was foreign; also Richard's excellence as a soldier was undoubted.

The Plantagenet's force lay at Leicester as Henry was advancing from Shrewsbury and the Severn valley towards Tamworth. But the two armies were not simply opposed; there was another factor present—a body of 5000 men lay near Lichfield under the command of Henry's stepfather, Stanley, whose attitude was doubtful. Richard seized the son and heir of Stanley, Lord Strange, and held him as a hostage while he concentrated at Leicester on August 20, on which day Richard moved a short march farther east from Tamworth to Atherstone.

The two armies met on the field of Bosworth, between Atherstone and Leicester, on Friday, August 22. Stanley's brother had already joined the invader, and Richard, rightly believing that Stanley was going to betray him, ordered young Lord Strange to be put to death—an order that was never carried out; for those who had the custody of the young man saved him, and his father was free to join Henry Tudor. He did so; and thus the forces were more nearly equal when the shock took place.

Richard led his men with admirable courage, and the last of the Plantagenets went down, fighting as all the Plantagenets had fought, and worthy of the great military tradition of his race; he fell seeking out the Tudor to kill him with his own hands. He rode into battle with a crown upon his helmet, which when he had fallen was picked up and put on Henry's head, and so ended the Plantagenet name in England.

## VII

# THE ADVENT OF THE REFORMATION

## HENRY VII

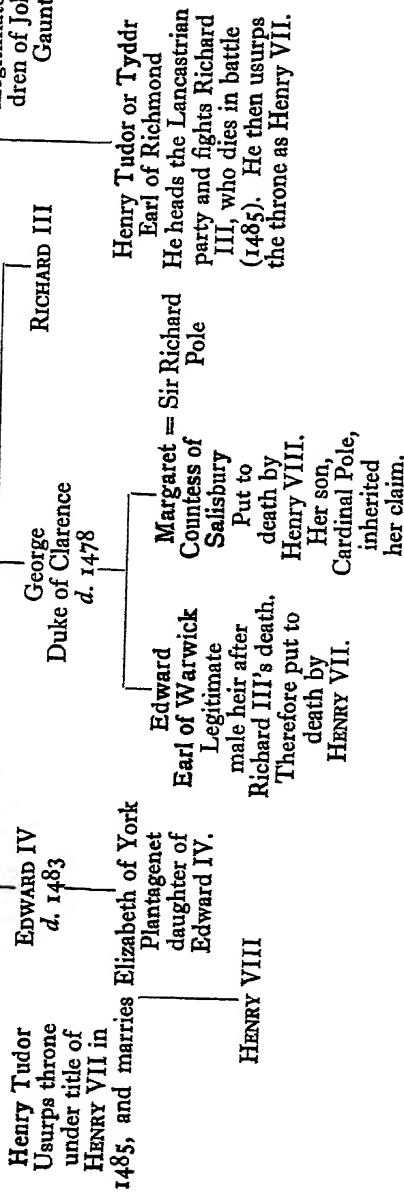
**The New Things.** That great change which we spoke about in connection with the middle of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the Wars of the Roses in England—the new voyages of discovery, the beginnings of printing, the fall of Constantinople, the revival of the old Roman-Greek model in painting, architecture, and sculpture, and, most important of all, the strain that was appearing between the official organization of the Church—had developed between the date 1450 and the date 1485, thirty-five years, the active part of a human life. The memory of a divided Papacy had died down; the chief office in Christendom was united and secure, but it carried less moral weight than of old, and seemed more and more of an Italian principate, concerned with its own politics, great revenue, and diplomacy.

Printing had developed by 1485 from a tentative experiment to an active social agent. The art had arisen in the Rhine valley; it was Germans who carried it originally throughout the West. It had not yet produced any profound effect upon society, for it always takes a long time for a new invention to develop into a regular social habit; and as with printing so with artillery. The use of cannon in so reliable a form as to change the art of war and ultimately destroy the medieval type of castle and town wall, by rendering them useless for permanent defence, had been slowly developing for a long time. It was by now, in 1485, in full swing, but men had not yet fully appreciated what it was destined to do. Similarly in the field of religion the protests against the 'crystallization' of Church methods, especially in matters of Church income, were continuous and had become a habit. The whole world was filled with a demand for "the reform of Head and Members"; but the old habits continued, and their evil effects increased. Now that the Papacy was settled again it especially dreaded the revival of the

# THE ADVENT OF THE TUDORS AND THEIR MURDERS OF THE PLANTAGENETS

Henry V leaves a widow, Katharine of France; she takes a paramour who is one of her upper servants called Owen Tudor, or Tyddr, a Welshman. No proof they were ever married. They have a son, Edmund Tudor, who is made Earl of Richmond = Margaret Beaufort

The last heiress of the Beauforts, illegitimate children of John of Gaunt.



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Great Councils, and so did Christendom as a whole. The Councils of the late Middle Ages had done little save quarrelling; their memory was unfavourable to the calling of a new one.

On the political side of things the new strong, centralized monarchies, of which Louis XI had set the example in France and Edward IV in England, had now become a matter of course. The separate monarchies in Spain were coalescing also, and were about to become one single great kingdom. The King of Aragon had married the heiress of Castile and Leon sixteen years before the battle of Bosworth, and ten years later the two sovereigns ruled what was rapidly becoming one realm. It is to be noted, however, that this principle of a strong central monarchy, now predominant in the West, did not arise among the Germans. The Germans had over them the Emperor, but outside his private domain he had no direct power. The Germans were broken up into a mass of 'free cities' and great Church dioceses, over which the bishop was monarch, and into principalities, large and small. In Italy there was the same division of territory; the Papal States in the middle, the Sicilian kingdom to the south, city states and principalities to the north.

**Belated Effect of these New Things on England.** The decisive change in the mind and materials of society which marked the Middle Ages in these forms came later in England than on the Continent. It is true that under Edward IV, in the twelve years after the battle of Tewkesbury, the typical centralized monarchy of the time had begun to appear; but we have seen how there was renewed war. The full establishment of a firmly settled and unconquered central kingdom in England—the fading out of the old independent local feudal powers—was not apparent until the Tudor usurpation in 1485. It is from 1485 that there begins in England that type of strong royal government which had been forged in France by Louis XI in the years before his death in 1483. Printing also came late into England, being introduced by one William Caxton, who seems to have established his first printing press less than ten years before the battle of Bosworth. He had learned the art in the Low Countries, and it was at Bruges that he had set up the first book printed in the English language, a couple of years before. The first printed book completed by Caxton was issued in 1477.

As with printing so with the development of arms and the change in architecture and painting—all these came from across

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the water comparatively late into England. England developed a very remarkable late medieval architecture of its own, but the influence of classical models was not felt here until long after. Indeed, conservatism in the matter of architecture has been one of the most striking things in later English history also. The last of the Middle Ages was a period of great building activity here, but it remained, in its whole conception, essentially medieval till far into the next century.

**The York Marriage.** Henry Tudor's usurpation did more violence to tradition and was more drastic in its effects than the Lancastrian usurpation of eighty-six years before. There were at least four people, men and women, alive at the time who had a better claim to the throne, being descended legitimately through the women, daughters of the sons of Edward III, from true Plantagenet stock. Of these legitimates young Warwick, the son of Clarence, was the chief. He was only ten years old at the battle of Bosworth, and had he been a man Henry might never have succeeded. This lad had the title of Warwick because his mother was the daughter of that great Earl of Warwick who had been the "King-maker" at the end of the Wars of the Roses, but his father, Clarence, was a true Plantagenet; his grandfather was the Duke of York of the Wars of the Roses, and his great-great-grandfather, also Duke of York, was the son of Edward III.

One of the first acts of Henry therefore after he had seized the throne was to have the boy closely confined, preparatory to murdering him.

Henry Tudor entered London with some pomp on September 3, and affirmed his title to the crown before the Parliament (in which there were only eighteen lay peers present, together with thirty-six abbots and bishops). But he could give no title, even less than could Henry of Lancaster, who, after all, had been next in blood to Richard II and a true Plantagenet. Thus Henry Tudor only spoke vaguely of "inheritance remaining to him": nothing more.

His next action was to strengthen his position by marrying Elizabeth of York, the daughter of Edward IV. The marriage took place on January 18, 1486, and at the end of September of the same year an heir was born, and baptized Arthur. This heir would have a stronger position than his father, for he could claim through his mother to be of the right Plantagenet line. Henry

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Tudor, thus confirmed on the throne, was now a young man of thirty, rather tall, with grey, very intelligent, secretive eyes, full of observation, sparse-haired, and showing the edges of bad teeth through thin, rarely parted lips. It was clear that he had studied the methods and character of Louis XI of France, and he was very well fitted to copy that master of intrigue and policy. He was determined to make the English Crown independent of fiscal aid, as it had become independent of feudal support, and he had the advantage of being able to confiscate land in masses on the plea of treason: that plea was always advanced against opponents as one party or the other succeeded in the struggle which had gone on since the beginning of the Wars of the Roses. In an age when the arts were re-arising with new vividness Henry Tudor was indifferent to them all, save to one, music.

**The New Royal Jurisdiction : Star Chamber.** While Henry based himself upon money, accumulated through vast confiscations, and by rigorous collection of dues, by loans which were not repaid, and by excessive fines, he also developed—or, rather, changed in radical fashion—the legal instruments of the Crown. He continued throughout his reign to increase the power of the law courts, which were as yet wholly at the service of the King. He also struggled successfully against the grouping of armed servants around the principal nobles. But the most important of his great reforms, and one which showed his statesmanship to the full, was his establishment of a special court for the confirmation of the kingly domination over what was left of the local feudal power.

This court came to be known, from the chamber in the palace where it sat (a room the ceiling of which was decorated with stars), as the Court of Star Chamber, and it was the very foundation of strong royal government in England as long as the active English monarchy lasted. Its special characteristic was that it was not, like the other courts, traditionally in the hands of the lawyers. It was really no more than the expression of the King's will, for he could summon whom he chose to sit as judges in that court; commonly it included a certain proportion of lawyers, but always more officials and nobles. Its prime characteristics were rapidity and elasticity of action. Through Star Chamber the King could deal at once with preparations for rebellion, with libels (especially those affecting the royal power),

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and with pretty well anything which threatened to diminish kingship.

**Margaret of Burgundy. The Claimants.** Over against the usurpation of Henry Tudor stood a Plantagenet of courage and great influence, the sister of Edward IV, who was now Dowager-Duchess of Burgundy, and kept her court at Malines. That court was to be the centre of support for nearly every effort made against the new dynasty. Another sister had married the Duke of Suffolk, John de la Pole, and they had had a son—that Earl of Lincoln who had been nominated heir by Richard III. This man Lincoln went to Dublin in May 1487, after consulting with the Duchess of Burgundy; a certain Lambert Simnel was crowned in Dublin under the title of Edward VI, under the pretence that he was the young Earl of Warwick—who was as a fact in the Tower, and recognizable by anybody.

It was a clumsy fraud, and when Lincoln brought over to England a small body of German mercenaries and half-armed Irish levies Henry's army met them on the Trent, near Stoke, and destroyed them, Lincoln himself being killed. To render the claim of the absurd Lambert Simnel still more ridiculous Henry gave the lad a place among his servants, first in the kitchen and afterwards as falconer.

There was no further trouble until the much more serious affair of Perkin Warbeck, which should always leave doubts in the mind of any impartial inquirer. In the years between these two claimants there had been a small effort to help the Breton efforts against the King of France, and, what was much more important and a very great proof of Henry's statesmanship, an alliance with Spain, now becoming a great power through the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile and Leon. By a treaty called the Treaty of Medina del Campo (March 27, 1489) the alliance was to be confirmed by a marriage between Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and Prince Arthur of England. They were as yet, of course, only children, but the marriage was to be solemnized when they should reach suitable age.

Things seemed thus settled when, in 1492, the chief peril to the new dynasty appeared. A ship coming from Lisbon anchored in Cork harbour, and on board was a young man of about twenty, well-featured and with the manners of the highest rank; and the rumour spread that he was Richard, Duke of

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York, the younger of the two boys whom Richard III had imprisoned and perhaps murdered in the Tower. Many of those who met him could remember the young Prince as he had been nine years before, and though there must be a difference between a boy of eleven and a young man of twenty, a similarity of feature can certainly be appreciated. This young man had been patronized by the French court and treated there as the legitimate King of England, with a large train of Yorkist English gentry about him. When Henry had made peace with France this youth had to leave the French court for that of the Duchess of Burgundy; she recognized him as her nephew, and Clifford, who was later bribed by Henry but who was at this moment independent, confirmed Margaret of Burgundy's decision. His word had great weight, for in the past he had known the young Prince well. The Emperor Maximilian also received the young man and took him without a doubt to be what he claimed to be.

If it should be generally believed in England that a Plantagenet had indeed appeared alive, the true son of Edward IV, Henry's throne would not have held. He met the crisis by starting a terror. At the end of 1494 he ordered certain executions, not very numerous, but acting at 'key points,' getting rid of men who were accused of corresponding with the claimant. Henry also intrigued unsuccessfully to get the claim disavowed abroad, and early in 1495 he produced a great effect by putting to death his stepfather, Sir William Stanley, by whose brother the battle of Bosworth had been won. Henry had further done everything he could to bring the claimant into disrepute by spreading stories of his base origin, affirming that he was a certain Osbert, called Warbeck, from Tournai, on the Scheldt, the son of humble folk who lived by water-carriage on that river.

Spending money lavishly on the case, Henry could always produce witnesses to support him, but he did not convince his opponents. The claimant had not the manners or appearance of the low birth ascribed to him. His adherents made an attempted descent upon England at Deal at the Emperor's expense in July 1495 which failed, but as he himself had not landed he was still safe. He made a similar attempt just afterwards in Ireland which also failed, and then he went on to Scotland, where he was received in state at Stirling by King James IV, and married a

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woman in the very highest of the Scottish families, a Gordon. He was now openly recognized as rightful King of England.

After a rebellion in Cornwall against the heavy taxation of Henry Tudor and another fruitless effort in Ireland, the claimant landed in the West of England, in Cornwall, on September 7, 1497, marched to Bodmin with a small company of just over a hundred men, and raised his standard there under the title of Richard IV. By the time he got to Exeter he had with him some 6000 men, but he had no guns, and so failed to take the city with some loss, and fled to sanctuary at the monastery of Beaulieu, upon Southampton Water. At last he surrendered to the King at Taunton, and there submitted to all the demands made of him, acknowledging himself to be what Henry had affirmed; and a letter was written in his name, perhaps by himself, to his mother (or supposed mother) in Tournai. He was led back to Westminster, where he arrived on November 27, 1497.

But what followed is very curious. He was released, and allowed to live openly at court. It was a clever move, very characteristic of Henry, for supposing that the claimant was what great numbers of those who had known him and his father affirmed him to be, his execution would have confirmed that view, especially as the real heir, the young Earl of Warwick, was still kept a strict prisoner in the Tower, while the claimant was living as an equal among the greatest nobles of the court. Whatever were the truth, the end of the adventure was more singular still. The claimant left the court suddenly in June 1498: he was followed, arrested, made to read his supposed confession again in public, but his life was again spared; only, he was shut up with young Warwick in the Tower.

Henry employed a secret agent, what Scotland Yard calls to-day a 'nark'—such characters played a great part throughout the policy of all the Tudors except Mary—to worm himself into the confidence of the young men and to urge them to rebellion and escape. On the strength of his evidence the claimant was hanged, drawn, and quartered on Saturday, November 23, 1499. In the next week, on Friday, the 29th, poor young Warwick was similarly half-strangled, disembowelled, and quartered.

The problem has never been solved. On the one hand, everything looks as though Henry, by the lavish use of money, had bribed the claimant after his cause was hopeless, and had

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used him as an unconscious agent so as to have an excuse for putting to death the man who really endangered his throne—Warwick, the true heir. That would account for the escape from court, for Henry's knowledge of the same, for the consequent imprisonment and all that followed. This, combined with the universal recognition of the young man by those who were best able to judge, strongly supports his claim. But, on the other hand, there is the fact that he never accounted for his escape from the Tower as a child, or for the years between that escape and his first appearance in Ireland, nine years after Richard III had imprisoned his young nephews.

**The Marriage with Catherine of Aragon.** The putting to death of poor young Warwick shocked the conscience of Christendom and England. It was remembered bitterly and openly by young Catherine of Aragon herself afterwards, when she said that her approach to the throne of England had been marked by a deed of blood. That young Princess of Spain landed at Plymouth on October 2, 1501, and was married to Prince Arthur in St Paul's on November 15. They were of what the Church called marriageable age, and many another royal marriage had taken place between boys and girls even younger; Catherine was just on sixteen, and Arthur was less than a year younger, but they were still too young for the marriage to be a real marriage. It was never consummated, though the doubts that were cast upon this fact fill the most important moment of English history, in the subsequent divorce of Catherine from her second husband. Within five months, on April 4, 1502, Prince Arthur was dead.

What should follow? A very large dowry had been promised with Catherine. Henry's Queen died in 1503; he could marry again, and he made the really abominable proposal that he should himself be married to Catherine—a proposal which was rejected with intense indignation by her mother Isabella. But that such a suggestion should ever be possible shows what a long way Europe had travelled from the faith and moods of the High Middle Ages. In the upshot the position was settled by the betrothal of Catherine, at the end of 1503, to Arthur's younger brother Henry, who was now the heir to the throne. He was only eleven years old, between five and six years younger than Catherine, and the marriage had to be postponed until he should be of marriageable age.

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Meanwhile Henry's daughter, the Princess Margaret, who had been affianced to the King of Scotland at the age of twelve, went off to that country. From her was to descend the 'Scottish line' through the claims of which came later the arrival of the Stuarts on the English throne.

**Henry Tudor's Finance.** The last years of Henry VII were filled with the full use of the centralized, almost despotic power now established, for the purpose of securing the financial strength of the Crown: looking to arrears, ferreting out and reviving every possible privileged feudal claim, increasing fines and forfeitures. Of the very many agents and officers employed on this ceaseless inquisition for money the two most important were Empson and Dudley, two lawyers. They soon became legendary, greatly to their hurt, for the mass of people will always symbolize an emotion in the person of a man, and Empson and Dudley were the two names which stood for the new rigorous fiscal policy of the first Tudor. All that Empson did was legal; it was but the excess of rigour which made him hated. Dudley, his partner in the work, acted on just the same lines, but the private fortune which he accumulated was to have a more enduring effect, for he became the ancestor of a family which played an almost royal part in the next century.

**Henry's Policy in Ireland.** The connection with Ireland had been allowed to go to pieces during the Lancastrian usurpation, and the link between the two countries got weaker still during the Wars of the Roses. Henry acted with his usual statesmanship and cunning in restoring a sort of interim arrangement, relying upon the greatest of the Irish nobles to act for the Crown. But during all this reign the situation remained on the whole what it had been for a century, ever since the effective policy of Richard II had been ruined by the Lancastrian usurpation. The great mass of Ireland remained what it had been, speaking a Celtic tongue unintelligible to the English, who effectively held only the Pale round Dublin. The lords of the country, whether of original native descent or descended from the Angevin nobles who had married into Irish families, had merged, so far as custom and speech were concerned, with the great bulk of the country, and though there still remained that fundamental quarrel between the feudal laws introduced by Henry II's subjects in the twelfth century and the old Irish tribal law, the spirit of the latter had gained ground.

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Ireland was at this moment a nation more alien to England than it had been since the appearance of Strongbow in Leinster more than three hundred years before. But in the capital point of religion, which determines all culture, Ireland, though never feudalized, was one with all Western Europe and therefore with England; and the King of England retained the title, the position, and indeed the vague moral authority of "Lord of Ireland."

**The Death of Henry VII.** In foreign affairs Henry's whole effort during these last years was subordinated to his aim at increasing the economic basis of the royal power. He had secured his position by marriage with Scotland and with the new great power of Spain; he took a belated and timid part in the new great voyages: the most famous of them all, the expedition of Columbus, had taken place in 1492. It had made the discovery of the West Indies, but did not set foot upon the mainland of America, and had been financed mainly by the crown of Spain. Four years later, in 1497, Giovanni Cabotto, —like Columbus, a Genoese but naturalized a Venetian, and settled in Bristol—crossed the Atlantic under the patronage of Henry Tudor himself, sailing from Bristol with two ships, one of which was paid for by the King. He sighted Nova Scotia, and two years later followed the American mainland coast. It was the first touching upon that coast of a European since a probable (but not certain) Norse adventure in the Middle Ages. Nothing came of it, and Cabotto's later life was spent outside this country.<sup>1</sup>

On April 22, 1509, the usurper Henry Tudor, having so thoroughly succeeded in his villainies, died, after several fits of the gout.

## HENRY VIII (FIRST PART)

**The New Reign.** To Henry VII his only remaining son, a young man not quite eighteen years of age, succeeded. He was a large and as yet a handsome fellow, still good-natured and merry, fond of sport and popular, impulsive; of a sort which easily falls into being managed by other people, and then as readily gets angry at finding he is being managed, and breaks

<sup>1</sup> His son Sebastian, whose name is better remembered in its French form of *Cabot*, claimed the honours due to his father; it was the elder Cabot (or rather Cabotto) who made these original discoveries, not Sebastian.

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away. He had a pudgy face and reddish hair, with the clear skin which often accompanies that colouring in youth; he had grey-green eyes set very far apart, rather flat in the face, their expression as yet not hardened or dulled by sensual excess.

The first thing the new young King did was to marry Catherine on June 3, little more than six weeks after his father's death. She was, as we have seen, five and a half years older than himself, a fair, squat young woman, very good-natured; at young Henry's age this difference in years is rather an advantage than otherwise to a marriage—though later it may be fatal. There was no question of his moral right to make the marriage, though Catherine had been nominally the wife of his brother: few doubted that the first marriage had been imperfect and never consummated; had it not been so her father-in-law, wicked as he was, would never have mentioned the idea of his marrying her himself; moreover, she was wedded in white and with unloosened hair, as a maid. Nor did anyone suggest anything against it until years later, when it became a matter of policy to do so.

Henry inherited an enviable position. There was a very large balance of money for public use in his treasury; he had a good and capable and highly popular wife; he himself was popular, and made himself the more so by putting to death Empson and Dudley, sacrificing them to the anger of the London merchants whom they had taxed—but he did at least restore their fortunes to their heirs; hence the very great financial position of the Dudley family in the next generation.

Older men could still remember the vileness of the Tudor origins, but the mass of the people had by now accepted the dynasty. What did begin in these first years, and was to help in the coming disasters, was family misfortune in the way of children. The first son born to Henry VIII (on New Year's Day, 1511) died within two months; then two others died in succession, one immediately after birth and another stillborn. It was not till nearly seven years after the marriage that a child survived, a daughter, the Princess Mary. After her a son was again hoped for, but the child when born was a daughter and died in its turn.

All this, however, lay in the future; the King's disappointment at the loss of his first boy might easily be remedied by the appearance of an heir later on. The unity of the kingdom

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appeared secure, socially, politically, and—what was most important of all—in the matter of religion. The Church, corrupt all over Europe and its corruption everywhere protested against, was on the whole less corrupt here in England than elsewhere. There was here, as everywhere, a certain popular feeling against the financial exactions of the clergy, the large incomes paid to them, the rents due on the monastic estates, and the perpetual irritation of the Church courts, with their enforcement of fines and their use as supports of the clerical power, in which they had to do with all manner of questions affecting men's private lives. There was a particular irritation against the *mortuary dues*, payments which had to be made on the death and burial of any Christian. These often involved the sacrifice of pieces of property valuable in the eyes of the smaller people, and led to bad friction between clergy and laity. But there was no heresy to speak of in England. Lollardry had died out long ago, and the monastic system was sounder here than elsewhere. Elsewhere, notably in Scotland, the revenues of the great monasteries had been seized by laymen, who left clerics in charge of them with a stipend and spent the moneys of the Church lands remaining after the support of the community had been allowed for as private income of their own. But England was fairly free from this evil system. The bishops' endowments were not badly encroached upon, and the revenues of the Church, though they were excessive for their purpose and had been put by many of the higher clergy to unworthy uses, were, on the whole, devoted to the objects intended for them—the maintenance of worship, the relief of the poor, and the stipends of the main working clerical posts.

**Wolsey.** It was a Churchman who first obtained power and took over the management of the young man, the King. This Churchman was a certain Thomas Wolsey, twenty years older than his young master, of good middle-class parentage and education, a man of very great capacity who had already risen high in his profession, having been noticed and supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, becoming a royal chaplain, and being used in foreign embassies. He was a member of the Council within two years of Henry's succession, and thenceforward had in his hands more and more of the real government of the country. Wolsey was typical of the Church of that day, or at least of many of its higher officials: he thought nothing of

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keeping a mistress and having an illegitimate family, of retaining in his hands all manner of separate clerical incomes, which had come to be regarded as we to-day regard dividends, or stocks and shares.

Wolsey was perhaps not responsible for the bad foreign policy which began almost immediately on his accession to power. He had to humour the King somewhat as he assumed more and more control over him; the King by his vanity was responsible for a bad foreign policy, the chief defects of which were that it was futile and that it was enormously expensive, wasting the large balances accumulated by Henry VII. Wolsey might have remodelled that policy. He preferred to follow it on account of the hold it gave him over the King by appealing to his vanity.

**The Foreign Expeditions.** Henry's desire to play some theatrical part and to appear in arms was the natural wantonness of a young fellow of his age and temperament. His chance came in 1512. Julius II was the Pope of the moment, an old man close on seventy, but very vigorous and of a soldierly temperament, worldly after the fashion of the time, but with a genuine enthusiasm for Christendom, and genuinely desirous of uniting the Christian princes against the crying peril of the Mohammedan, who was sweeping westward. But, though he had this to his credit, Julius II, like every Pope of the Renaissance, was absorbed in his temporal possessions and his principality of the Papal States. He began by forming an alliance against Venice, because that powerful state marched with his own and threatened his borders. In this alliance the Emperor and the King of France, Louis XII, who held the district of Milan, and Ferdinand of Spain, who was also the sovereign of the south of Italy, broke the Venetian power—whereupon the Pope allied himself with Venice and challenged the French power in Milan.

The French all but conquered him; he formed yet another alliance against them with Ferdinand and the Emperor, both of whom desired land at the expense of France, Ferdinand being especially anxious to get that part of Navarre which lies south of the Pyrenees and of which the capital is Pampeluna. Henry VIII was glad enough to join his father-in-law, the Spanish King, in this adventure. He claimed the old Plantagenet fiefs in France by way of a flourish, and declared war on France in June 1512. He sent English forces north of the Pyrenees to help his father-in-law, but they were held up, while Ferdinand's forces, thus relieved from pressure, did the

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work and got the credit by conquering Spanish Navarre the next year, 1513. Henry also sent a really large body of 23,000 Englishmen into Flanders to help the Emperor's German soldiers there; they besieged and took Tournai, and garrisoned it with Englishmen—and all this at enormous expense and with no ultimate result.

**Flodden.** But by an accident this war of 1513 did have one very great effect. The King of Scotland (Henry's own brother-in-law, James IV) had come into England over the border as the ally of the King of France. He had a very large army, but only half of it trained, and Queen Catherine, who was Regent of England in the absence of her husband, sent against these invaders the head of the Howards, Thomas Howard. He was an old man of seventy, but still active and a good soldier, and was called the Earl of Surrey. He would have been Duke of Norfolk but for the fact that the title had been attainted after Bosworth, for the Duke of Norfolk had fought on Richard's side in that battle and was killed there, when his son Thomas (now sent by Catherine to fight the Scots) was already over forty years of age.

This Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, won, upon Flodden Hill, close to the border, a complete victory, taking all the Scottish artillery. The Scots left 10,000 dead, among them many of their nobles, but also their King: Thomas Howard had his father's title of Duke of Norfolk restored to him as a reward. This King of Scotland, James IV, who was killed at Flodden left only a baby, James V, to succeed him, and during that long minority the influence of England was more and more felt; it was thus on Flodden Field that the ultimate union of England and Scotland began.

Even while Henry was preparing for another campaign in 1514 he heard that the King of France had bought off the Emperor by offering him Milan, and that his old father-in-law Ferdinand proposed to make peace also and to be content with the capture of Navarre. Henry was isolated and angry. He quarrelled with his father-in-law, so that on the Continent some people imagined<sup>1</sup> he might be sending his wife

<sup>1</sup> A statement has been recently advanced by Professor Pollard and eagerly repeated that Henry had entertained the idea of divorcing Catherine as early as 1514. It is based on an untraceable rumour related by an individual in Italy, with no corroboration from England.

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back, but the King of France, Louis XII, patched up the business by offering to marry Henry's young sister Mary, a girl of sixteen. Louis was fifty-seven, and three months after the wedding he was dead. His widow married, greatly to the anger of Henry (who was always being duped by those about him), a friend of his own, the son of his father's standard-bearer, one Charles Brandon, who had been made Duke of Suffolk when he was on an embassy to the Netherlands. The successor to Louis XII, the young King Francis I, pushed over the Alps and recovered Milan, and the new Medici Pope, Leo X, looking round him for allies and desirous of having the support of England in whatever might befall in the new state of affairs, made Wolsey, who had already been made Archbishop of York, a Cardinal. He was installed in Westminster Abbey at the end of the year 1515, and just before Christmas was made Chancellor—which was then the supreme office in the government of England, like a modern executive and judiciary rolled into one. He was not yet Papal Legate, a position which would have given him a certain control of the Church in England as well, but that was soon to come. Meanwhile he used his power magnificently to make great endowments, and especially to found a new college at Oxford (now known as Christ Church) on a scale hitherto unknown. For this purpose he obtained leave from the Pope to suppress certain small monasteries, take their revenues, put the inmates into larger establishments, and use the property for his new endowments. To do this work he used a certain agent, Thomas Cromwell, of whom we shall hear more later.

### **The Outbreak of Religious Revolt on the Continent.**

While all these things, which appeared so important to the men of the time—alliances, victories and defeats, and the rest—were in progress, with Wolsey already dreaming of the Papacy and scheming, to the delight of Henry, to increase the English power abroad, there took place an incident which seemed insignificant enough but which was the starting-point of that great catastrophe in which Christendom broke asunder.

On All Saints' Day, November 1, 1517, on the door of the Castle Chapel at Wittenburg, in Saxony, where notices of academic disputes were pinned up (for there was a newly founded university there), appeared a list of ninety-five short academic theses to be defended.

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These theses turned upon a matter which already had been much disputed among the people—certain indulgences granted by the Pope and the Archbishop of Mayence. The proposal for the discussion of these points adverse to the indulgences had been made by an energetic Augustinian monk of thirty-five, one Martin Luther. To every one's surprise—including his own—the incident suddenly let loose that pent-up flood of religious discontent which, had men only watched the signs of the times, they would have known might burst forth at any moment. A wild enthusiasm arose throughout the Germanies: protests in varying degrees of violence and attacks on doctrine and the whole organization of the Church. There boiled up a flood of reaction against the whole body of religion which the corruption and worldliness of the higher clergy, the laxity of monastic houses, and a sort of fixed fossilization of forms and abuses had aroused.

Luther himself was carried on the crest of that wave and became spokesman of the new movement, but many others joined in, especially the scholars, whose research had led them to protest against what they found unhistorical in legend. Vows of celibacy were attacked, monks and nuns abandoned their religious houses voluntarily or were turned loose, and the rulers of the free cities and the princes of the small states suddenly found that the revenues of the Church lay open and defenceless to be despoiled at will.

This last factor in the business, the opportunity for loot on an enormous scale, became allied as a driving-force with the other driving-force of negative religious enthusiasm, which was filled with an increasing hatred against traditional forms and doctrines—particularly against the Mass and that dogma of the Real Presence which was so intimately bound up with the special powers of the clergy.

**The Position in England.** England suffered nothing at first from this rising storm abroad. As has been so often the case in history, the island was protected morally by the sea from the contagion of violent change as it was protected physically from invasion. King Henry himself, who had been intended while his brother Arthur lived for the Archbishopric of Canterbury, having had some training in theology and being very proud of his skill in the niceties of that science, wrote a book in defence of the Seven Sacraments, in return for

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which the Pope granted him the title of Defender of the Faith.

There was no trace of religious revolution in England. Not only did the King (with Wolsey at his side) and the whole official structure of the state stand firm, but popular opinion, even in towns, like London, where there was sharp bickering between clergy and people, had no idea of attacking the doctrines by which all society had lived from immemorial time. But the example of what was going on abroad was present; the same forces of scholarship, of contempt for ill-founded tradition and legend, of irritation against the wealth and power of the clergy, of indignation against the worldliness of its higher ranks, were in existence here also, and might here also be roused to activity. Most important of all, a very large revenue indeed, long protested against, went to the priests—the dues paid to the clergy in every form, the property of monasteries, the endowment of Church offices, etc. Overseas the loot had begun. If loot once started here the appetite of those who should profit by it would be irresistible.

**The Advent of Anne Boleyn.** But so far there was no sign of all this. An Englishman of those years between 1517 and 1525 who should have been told that the Catholic faith was in danger would have thought the statement as absurd as one who should have heard it said twenty years ago that England might become Communist.

Then something in no way connected with the religious trouble changed everything: Anne Boleyn captured Henry.

Queen Catherine had ceased to bear children, and her husband had ceased to live with her from the year 1524 onward. He had got debauched; he had contracted a loathsome disease; his character had heavily deteriorated. Moreover, he was brooding upon the absence of a male heir to the throne, and had even considered the possibility of legitimizing an illegitimate son so as to provide such an heir; for his only surviving child was the Princess Mary. So things stood when there appeared at his court a young woman of whose age we are not certain (she was probably about twenty-three years old), called Anne Boleyn (pronounced at that date, and often written, Bullen).

Her father was a wealthy man, of merchant origin, the grandson of a Lord Mayor of London, but of landed position

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and connected with the Ormonde inheritance in Ireland. What was much more important than her father's social status was her mother's, for her mother was a Howard, the daughter of that fine old soldier who had conquered at Flodden and the sister of the Duke of Norfolk of the day. Anne Boleyn was vivacious, black-haired, French-speaking by training, though she could speak English as well. She had a certain deformity, described by some as the doubling of the little finger of one hand, and by others as a sixth finger. She had at first set her cap at young Percy, the heir to the great house of Northumberland, and become privately engaged to him. Her sister, Mary Boleyn, had already been the King's mistress, whom when he had tired of her Henry had married to a country gentleman of the name of Carey. Somewhere in the summer of 1523 Henry had already taken so much notice of Anne Boleyn that he had ordered the little affair with Percy to be stopped. He evidently intended Anne to be his mistress as her sister Mary had been, though it is also evident that she refused. She understood Catherine's position. She saw that the King was half off his head with passion for herself, and she conceived the plan which, with great tenacity, she finally carried out, of making herself Queen of England. Hers is the contriving brain and the driving-power throughout all that followed.

We cannot, of course, give the exact date upon which the bargain was struck between Henry and his Anne, but we can say with fair certainty that it was somewhere in the course of the summer of 1525. We may take as a starting-point June 18 of that year, when Anne Boleyn's father was made a peer. Thenceforward were let loose those forces which, no one at first intending it, transformed England.

## VIII THE SCHISM

### HENRY VIII (SECOND PART)

**Origin of the Schism.** The Reformation was introduced into England not by a change in religion, but by a breach with Rome. The practice of the old religion with all its doctrines unimpaired, the Mass, the hierarchy, etc., continued after as before the breach with Rome, and for the populace no difference was discernible.

The origin of that schism was the infatuation of the King, Henry VIII, with Anne Boleyn. There was also brought into the business the pretence that he was equally actuated by the desire to have a male heir. He certainly did desire to have a male heir, but that was not the cause at work; if it had been he would have attempted to get a new marriage much earlier, for it was known that his wife Catherine could not have children after the year 1519, eight years before he first moved for a new marriage.

Anne's postponement of his desire until he should get rid of Catherine and make *her* Queen turned this infatuation into a mania—Henry himself accurately described his condition when he said later that he had been "bewitched." The woman's control of him was complete; and she, using Henry as her instrument under that control, is the author of all that follows.

**The Divorce begins.** What was essential for Anne Boleyn, and therefore striven for by Henry, was a divorce by authority from Rome from his wife and Queen, Catherine of Aragon.

The word 'divorce' in this connection does not mean divorce in our modern sense at all. It does not mean the ending of a marriage with a legitimate wife still alive and the granting of legal permission to marry another wife—such an idea did not exist at the time. The word 'divorce' in this case meant the *annulment* of the first marriage; that is, the declaration by

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ecclesiastical authority, and, in case of appeal, by the highest ecclesiastical court—that of the Pope—that the first marriage had never been a true marriage at all.

Such a verdict could be given on various grounds—lack of consent, a close blood-relationship from which there had been no dispensation granted, proof that the marriage was not consummated, etc.: sometimes even by both parties agreeing to separate and take vows of celibacy for the future. The Church officials of the day were cynical enough. A favourable verdict for a King wishing to be rid of his wife might be expected if there were any possible grounds, and especially if the wife whom it was proposed to put away agreed: as, for instance, if she admitted that the case against her marriage was a good one. Henry and Anne were therefore justified in believing, at first, that their chance of success stood high. On the other hand, the obstacles to it were formidable.

Catherine was the daughter of what was now one of the greatest Crowns in Europe—the Spanish. She was the aunt of that vast international personage and office, the Emperor Charles V. He would certainly support her if she stood firm, and she herself, though genial, was determined to assert her rights. Moreover, save in the matter of a male heir (which by this time was manifestly a false excuse), there was no question of policy involved. There was something more. To dissolve a royal marriage for the purposes of a dynasty was a grave matter, but to do so in satisfaction of a wanton and shameless caprice was scandalous.

We have seen that the summer of 1525 was the probable season when an understanding had been arrived at between Henry and Anne Boleyn on this matter. On the other hand, the great religious revolt against the Papacy was by this time in full swing throughout Germany, and the authority of the Pope was shaken not only in Germany, but elsewhere. It was thought that the French Crown might break with the Papacy, and the Pope would have every reason to go to the farthest lengths in trying to preserve the English connection. Moreover, there was acute rivalry between the Emperor and the French Crown for domination in North Italy, both claiming sovereignty over Milan. Lastly, and most important, the Turkish pressure against the Empire from the east was becoming alarming and would weaken the Emperor's power.

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**The First Two Plans for getting the Divorce.** Wolsey, who was still the master of English policy and, until the appearance of Anne Boleyn, had been in full control of Henry, favoured the idea of the divorce. He had no conception that the new marriage contemplated was one with Anne Boleyn, for she had been very secretive and Henry had copied her secrecy, though he still remained very much afraid of Wolsey. Wolsey's idea was that after the marriage with Catherine had been declared annulled a new alliance should be formed by Henry's marriage with the sister of the King of France, Francis I. In the year 1526 there remains to us one allusion to a divorce policy at Rome, which refers almost certainly to Henry, but the first overt act towards divorce was taken in 1527. On April 23 of that year, the English national feast of St George, a great day at court, Henry revealed his intention to the French Ambassador.

The first plan was to summon secretly a spiritual court, consisting of the English prelates alone. This court should declare the marriage null, and so strengthen Henry's case if an appeal to Rome followed. The ground on which the marriage was to be declared null was the fact that Catherine had nominally been the wife of Henry's elder brother Arthur, who had died just after his marriage. It was to be maintained that no sufficient dispensation had been given by Rome for marrying a deceased brother's wife, and that therefore no true canonical marriage had taken place. Wolsey himself and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the aged and saintly-Wareham, were to form the court, and it was secretly summoned for Friday, May 17, 1527. Catherine was to be told nothing about it, and to be presented with the accomplished fact after the decision annulling her marriage had been given.

This first secret plan broke down because Mendoza, the representative of the Emperor Charles V in London, got wind of it and communicated it to Catherine. Opposition from her was now to be feared before a preliminary verdict could be given, so the scheme was abandoned.

The second plan was to summon the whole English bench of bishops and to have them pronounce publicly a unanimous verdict in favour of the nullity of the marriage, not only through lack of a sufficient dispensation after the original marriage between Catherine and Prince Arthur, but also on the grounds that marriage with a deceased brother's wife, *being opposed to*

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*the law of God, could not in any case be allowed by Papal dispensation*; for such dispensation, according to Catholic doctrine, can never suspend divine law, but only Church laws. This second plan also broke down, because unanimity of the bishops could not be arrived at. The chief obstacle was Henry's old tutor, now Bishop of Rochester, Fisher. He was a man who carried very great weight throughout Europe for his sanctity, learning, and age, and he insisted that the marriage was final and binding. From that moment Anne Boleyn regarded Fisher as her worst enemy.

**The Third Plan.** A third plan was now attempted. On June 22, 1527, the King approached his wife with the suggestion that she should admit her first marriage, with Prince Arthur, to have been a real one, and next that the dispensation given for it had been either insufficient or invalid in any case because it was against God's law: Catherine would then voluntarily retire to a convent, and Henry would also take vows of celibacy. From these he would next be dispensed by the Pope and so be free to marry again. This third plan in its turn broke down because Catherine absolutely refused to give way. She indignantly denied that the first marriage was a real one: so the next point did not arise. Wolsey did not understand how much his influence over Henry had been shaken, still less that it had been supplanted by that of Anne. He imprudently went abroad, thereby leaving the field free for Anne's influence to work its utmost—the reason for the Cardinal's absence being partly a desire to negotiate with France and partly to advance a scheme of his own which he hoped might lead ultimately to his being made Pope.

**The Capture of Rome and its Consequences.** While all this had been proceeding in England an event of the first magnitude had taken place on the Continent. An army in Italy which was in the service of the Emperor Charles V was short of pay and more or less out on its own, led by a French prince who had quarrelled with the French Crown, the Constable of Bourbon. This army attacked and captured Rome on May 5, 1527, sacked the city, and made the Pope prisoner. Although this army had been out of the Emperor's control, its capture of the Pope put the Papacy for the moment under Imperial power. And this gave Wolsey the opportunity of saying that the Pope, being under foreign control and not his

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own master, need not be regarded. Wolsey proposed that the King of France and the King of England should repudiate anything done by the Pope while he was a prisoner. Certain Cardinals should be summoned to meet at Avignon under French influence, and then, in the name of the whole Church, declare Henry's marriage with Catherine void. But the Pope escaped from the castle of Sant' Angelo, in Rome, where he had been confined, and took refuge in his own city of Orvieto. He was thus free to act again. This Pope, Clement VII, was a man of subtle but infirm character. He was in great perplexity, fearing that the French Crown would be lost to the Papacy, fearing to incur the further enmity of the Church in England and to lose connection with that Church. He determined to temporize. The longer he could keep the thing unsettled the more chance there was of something turning up. Catherine might give way; she might die; his predecessor's original dispensation allowing her to marry her brother-in-law Henry might be proved invalid.

Meanwhile it was essential for the Papacy that no Pope, whatever his policy, should abandon two essential things: first, his rights as a final judge of matrimonial and other moral cases; secondly, the necessity of being guided by the rules of his own courts. The Pope could not refuse a party against whom nullity of marriage was sought from appealing to him; he could not put the appellant out of court; and he was bound by the rules of evidence which his court had always, and must always, admit. It is through not appreciating this that many historians have gone wrong. They have thought that the Pope's attitude throughout was merely diplomatic, merely a series of schemes and intrigues for the advantage of the Papacy. It was much more, for it included the necessity any tribunal must consider, of maintaining its own authority and procedure.

**Wolsey asks for a Legatine Court.** When Wolsey returned to England, at the end of September 1527, he discovered (for the first time!) how great Anne's influence was. He made the error of allying himself with her, though secretly intending to defeat her object of becoming Queen, which would have ruined his plans of a French alliance. Anne and Henry sent an agent in private, independently of Wolsey (one Sir William Knight), to negotiate with Pope Clement, and Knight saw the Pontiff on December 18, in Orvieto, a fortnight

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after his escape from Rome. Knight presented certain documents which he required the Cardinal of Santi Quattro to sign, by the authority of the Pope. The Cardinal made certain apparently minor corrections in the documents and gave them back to Knight, who was satisfied. He thought he had succeeded; but Wolsey, when he saw the corrections which the Cardinal had made, discovered that they could be used to prolong the discussion indefinitely. He therefore made a personal effort to get a decision, and sent out the draft of a Bull to Rome. In this draft it was proposed to set up a legatine court in England—that is, a court having Papal authority and acting through Papal Legates. These Legates were to be Wolsey himself and Cardinal Campeggio, a man of great weight and already endowed with the revenues of an English bishopric (that of Salisbury). This court was to decide whether the original dispensation given by Julius II so many years ago for the marriage between Prince Arthur and Catherine were in valid form or no. *In case they decided it were not in valid form, the marriage was to be declared null, and against such sentence there was to be no appeal to Rome.* Such were the terms of the Bull drafted by Wolsey and sent out to the Pope to sign. By way of pressure to get this Bull signed by the Pope Wolsey sent out his secretary, Stephen Gardiner, an able man, devoted to Henry's cause and most energetic, but rough. He both threatened the Pope, admitting that the proposed marriage was to be with Anne Boleyn, and quite justly insisted on the semi-royal position of the Howards, to which family Anne's mother belonged. On April 8, 1528, the Pope yielded and signed. Anne, on seeing the document when it returned, regarded herself as victorious, for the court would be set up in England, the judges would be subjects of Henry,<sup>1</sup> and the verdict might be taken for granted. Wolsey, however, at once discovered that there was again a difficulty. Nothing appeared in the Bull as signed giving a promise not to permit an appeal to Rome by Catherine from the legatine court.

**The Decretal Bull.** Wolsey told no one about his discovery of the flaw—he even told Anne Boleyn's father that he was satisfied; but he secretly prepared yet another document, a Decretal Bull. A Decretal Bull was a Bull which, if the Pope should sign it, enunciated a canonical decision by decree

<sup>1</sup> Campeggio was a subject as the holder of an English bishopric\*

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—and the canonical decision asked for in this case was that marriage with a deceased brother's wife was against the laws of God, so that in any case a dispensation against it could not hold. We do not know the exact terms of this Decretal Bull, but we do know two things: (1) that Clement had the weakness to sign it; and (2) that though there was a written promise not to take away the powers of the legates, the way was *not* blocked to a final appeal. It still left the Pope under the obligation to listen to Catherine if she appealed to him.

This is an important point. The Pope promised not to interrupt the trial by taking away the powers of the judges, his Legates. But he did not promise that he would refuse to hear Catherine's appeal to himself as the final authority. Indeed, it would have been impossible to promise this.

But the Pope had half given way, leaving an impression of shiftiness; and he made things worse by telling Campeggio, when he gave him this document, not to let it out of his hands.

**The Legatine Court.** These delays were weakening Henry—a man never stable and always impulsive. The appearance of a pestilence in the summer of 1528 frightened him. He sent Anne away for a time, but she soon recovered her influence. Campeggio landed at Dover at the beginning of October in that year, 1528, but there were delays on both sides. Campeggio had been instructed to draw things out, according to that policy of temporization to which the Pope was wedded, and Henry himself needed delay in order to secure his position and, if possible, to get hold of the Decretal Bull and publish it to strengthen himself. Public feeling in England was very strong in favour of Catherine, and indignant with Anne, and the King sent away all Charles's subjects from London—there were 15,000 of them—and instituted a thorough search for arms in the capital, for fear of rebellion. Meanwhile the Emperor had produced a brief of Julius II's concerning the old marriage and confirming the dispensation. In February 1529 Pope Clement fell so ill that it was thought he would die, in which case all would have to be begun over again, but he recovered, the legatine court was formally opened on May 30 of that year, and on June 18 and 21 its active sessions began. Catherine at once entered two protests publicly and in person before the court: first she protested against the competence of the court

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because it was composed of her husband's bishops; secondly she solemnly declared that the marriage with Arthur had never been a true marriage, for it had never been consummated. She appealed to Henry to confirm that fact, and Henry did not contradict her. She then announced her intention of appealing to Rome.

For five weeks the trial dragged on, turning upon the point of the validity of the original marriage. Meanwhile Catherine's appeal had reached Rome, and on June 13 Clement sent word revoking the whole case to his own court. But before the order reached England the legatine court had been adjourned on July 23, as being the last day before the legal vacation of the Roman courts.

**Wolsey's Fall : the Advent of Cromwell.** It was clear that no decision could be reached that year, and that Clement was still playing for delay. Campeggio left Dover on Friday, October 8, a year after he had landed. His luggage was searched in vain for the Decretal Bull; he sailed, and on the morrow the chief law officer of the Crown indicted Wolsey for having broken the Statute of Præmunire by exercising legatine authority. The accusation was monstrous—Præmunire only applied to the introduction of Papal orders without the consent of the King, and Wolsey had been Legate under the authority of Henry's own Great Seal for fifteen years. Wolsey resigned the Chancellorship, the greater part of his property was taken from him, and he retired from court. Henry still tried to keep in touch with his fallen friend, but he only dared to do so secretly, for Anne's influence was all-powerful over him, and he feared it.

To Wolsey succeeded as the chief figure in England a certain Thomas Cromwell, who was the true author of the revolutionary acts which followed. This man (was the son of a public-house keeper in Putney; he had become a soldier of fortune, served on the Continent, got into the service of a financial house abroad, became a moneylender, and while he was accumulating a considerable fortune in England on his return had worked as an agent of Wolsey's for some years, notably in examining and suppressing certain small monasteries, whose endowments were to go to Wolsey's new great college at Oxford. This adventurer (Cromwell was a man of high ability, indefatigable, clear-headed, and though he never betrayed Wolsey

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—indeed, he spoke in his defence—he saw the opportunity of stepping into his master's shoes.

It was a critical moment. A Fellow of a Cambridge college, one Thomas Cranmer, whose sympathies were already with the Reformers, became chaplain to Anne Boleyn's family, and on his advice a plan already two years old was revived for getting from the universities of Europe a decision on the point of whether one might or might not marry one's brother's wife. After heavy bribery this plan failed in its turn, for the universities were divided, and after a certain number had given contradictory decisions the scheme was dropped. Henry became despondent. He spoke of giving up the struggle, and probably he was also for the moment irritated with Anne Boleyn. But Cromwell came in and saved her. His plan was clear, he followed it out consistently, and thenceforward step by step it is Cromwell who produces the schism of the English Church from unity.

The first step was to put the whole body of the Church in England completely under Government control. This could best be done by crippling it financially. Once terrorized, and thus weakened, the clergy would admit the full supremacy of the Crown (without mention as yet of the Papacy), and from such a position it would be possible to threaten the Papacy with separation unless the Pope were to yield in the matter of the divorce. The revenues which the Pope got from the English clergy were to be taken over by the national Government unless the Pope would grant a divorce. From such a position it would be easy either to coerce the Pope further or to declare, if necessary, a complete breach between him and the Crown of England, on the model of what had already been done by the Protestant princes in Germany. But there was no question of any tampering with Catholic doctrine, to which Henry was wedded and in which the English people were steeped.

A Parliament was summoned to give added solemnity to the great move; Wolsey was sent for, but he died on November 29, 1530, on his way up to London from his Archbishopric, and next month the attack on the clergy began. The whole body of the hierarchy and priests of England had information filed against them by the Attorney-General of having broken the law of *Præmunire* by accepting Wolsey's legatine authority.

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They tried to save themselves with the offer of a sum equivalent to some two and a half million pounds in our money, as an alternative to complete ruin; but they were told that the offer would not be accepted unless they would declare the King to be "the Protector and only Supreme Head of the Church and Clergy of England." There was resistance; Archbishop Warham stood out for an amendment, the addition of the words "as far as the Law of Christ will allow." Cromwell accepted that amendment because it might be used to give more time for coercing the Papal See to grant a divorce.

By May 1531 the whole Church in England—Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, alone protesting—the two Convocations representing the whole clerical body in England, had voted, with their grant of money, that they admitted the King to be "their single Protector, only and supreme Lord and *as far as the Law of Christ allows* supreme Head." Next year Convocation made its last surrender. It consented to make no canon—that is, to decide on no spiritual order—without leave from the Government; and Church law should be revised by a committee half of which was to be composed of laymen and all of which should be of governmental appointment. This time there was no serious opposition, the clergy were broken. Thomas Cromwell, already in control of the Government, was Chancellor and now as thoroughly in control of the English Church under the title of Vicar-General.

**The Decision to declare the Divorce in England.** The last effort at threatening the Pope into surrender was made by taking over his revenues in England in order to make him give way, although he had already solemnly forbidden a further marriage until his decision should be given. The Government stepped into the financial place of the Papacy so far as the English Church was concerned: it received the first-fruits—that is, the first year's revenue of a bishopric—which had hitherto been paid to Rome—but *it was left open to the Government to revoke the decision*. In this way pressure could still be put on the Pope: "If you will give way you shall have your English income again."

The obstacle to the declaring of the divorce in England, which policy was now decided on, lay principally in Archbishop Warham. He had wavered, but now that granting a divorce in England would mean a point-blank repudiation of the authority

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of the Pope he could not be got to act. Anne Boleyn and Cromwell seem to have thought of using *Præmunire* against him as it had been used against Wolsey, for it had already been decided by the summer of 1532 that Anne Boleyn's creature, Thomas Cranmer, should be made Archbishop of Canterbury for the special purpose of declaring the divorce and consecrating the new marriage. But there was no need to act against Warham, for the old man died on August 24 of that year, 1532, and there was nothing now to interfere with the completion of Anne Boleyn's long-delayed victory. In that summer for the first time Anne and Henry lived together as husband and wife; she was given ladies-in-waiting as though she were already Queen; she was given the semi-royal title of Marquis;<sup>1</sup> and a week after Warham's death an order was sent for Cranmer to come home.

**Cranmer, made Archbishop, declares the Divorce and marries Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII.** The order took a long time to reach Cranmer, who was abroad following the Emperor, to whom he had been accredited as Henry's envoy. It was not until November 18, the Emperor being then at Mantua, that Cranmer announced to Charles V that he had been recalled and received letters from him for Henry. Cranmer returned to England without undue haste, but not (as has been suspected) with undue delay; he left Mantua on November 19, arrived at Lyons three weeks later, and landed in England on January 6. Anne was already with child, and on or about January 25 Henry married her privately. The Pope made no difficulty about granting the Bulls for Cranmer's elevation to the Archbishopric, and he was enthroned on March 30, 1533, but not until he had protested before witnesses that he was prepared to perjure himself in the matter of his oath of fidelity to the Pope. Shortly afterwards Henry had in his hands the vote of the now wholly subservient clergy in Convocation that a marriage with a deceased brother's wife was against Divine Law, and that Catherine's marriage with Arthur had been consummated. On April 23, 1533, Cranmer pronounced Henry's marriage with Catherine null and void. On June 1, Whit Sunday, Anne was crowned by Cranmer in Westminster Abbey after passing in procession through crowds in the streets

<sup>1</sup> Not Marchioness. The reason for such an oddity has been discussed but not discovered.

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where no one uncovered as the new Queen went by. On September 7 her child was born in the palace at Greenwich; it was a girl, was christened Elizabeth, with Cranmer for godfather—and it lived.

**The Schism is completed.** Even now the schism with Rome was not complete. The King still persevered in attempting to get a declaration from the Papal Court that his marriage with Anne Boleyn was legal; the King of France, Francis I, did all he could to mediate between the two parties, but even before Anne had given birth to her child Rome had given sentence against Henry. Henry withdrew his Ambassador; Francis still worked as hard as he could at this eleventh hour for an agreement, urging that the marriage should be recognized before the Easter of 1534, but at a consistory court which was summoned on March 23 of that year only three of the twenty-two Cardinals voted for further delay, and nineteen decided for the validity of Catherine's original marriage with Henry, while none voted for its annulment. In England statutes were passed by Cromwell in the Parliament, which continued to sit, declaring it high treason to question the new succession. The Pope's name was removed from the Liturgy, and on November 3, 1534, the decisive Act of Supremacy (26 Hen. VIII, c. 1) was passed.

The schism was now, for the moment, complete, and a further act made it high treason to refuse the oath to the King of England, acknowledging that he was supreme in *spiritual* authority and jurisdiction.

But it is not enough to make a revolution on paper, it must be supported by force; Cromwell therefore began a reign of terror, which was to be the instrument of all that immediately followed.

**The Reign of Terror.** Cromwell's reign of terror was begun just after Anne's coronation. The divorce had been denounced publicly by an enthusiast in Kent, a certain Elizabeth Barton, known as the Holy Maid of Kent, who had ecstasies and visions. Archbishop Warham believed in her sanctity, which was famous throughout England when the divorce reached its critical moment. Among the very many who had had interviews with her were Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester, Henry's old tutor, who had always opposed the divorce; and Sir Thomas More, who was the great Chancellor of the day,

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famous throughout Europe for his learning, the friend of Erasmus and perhaps the most notable figure in England. Fisher believed in the genuineness of the maid's revelations and in her sanctity; More was less certain.

Cromwell, in order to make his terror the more effective, introduced arbitrary killing by Act of Attainder. There was no trial; the Government proposed a law declaring such and such a person to be attainted. Parliament—which was only there to register the decrees of the Government—passed the law, and the person or persons named were thereupon put to death. Cromwell proposed such a Bill for killing Elizabeth Barton and certain followers of hers, and, being determined to do the thing thoroughly, he added to the Bill the names of Fisher and More. At such an enormity many of the Upper House hesitated; but the Maid of Kent and six of her followers were killed on April 21, 1534. More and Fisher were kept back in the hope that they might take the Oath of Supremacy, and so strengthen the now schismatic position of the King, who had become, as it were, Pope in England. They refused. On June 22, 1535, Fisher was beheaded, and nine days later Sir Thomas More.

Cromwell had already turned upon the three orders of monks who had been most strict in their loyalty to the Papacy—the Brigittines, the reformed Franciscans, and especially the Carthusians. The heads of the three Carthusian houses were hanged, drawn, and quartered, and of the remainder of the order many died in prison after having been chained up to a wall for weeks on end.

**The Fall of Anne Boleyn. Jane Seymour.** The King's mania, which had led him to such a pass, began suddenly to decline. During this year, 1535, he became disgusted with Anne Boleyn. She bore another child which, if it had lived, would have been a male heir, but it was stillborn, and after that she seems to have gone mad. She knew that Henry had already begun a new love affair with one of her maids of honour, a certain Jane Seymour; she made violent scenes, and took on lovers herself; she was even accused of incest. On January 8, 1536, Queen Catherine died; in April Henry learned of the way in which Anne now jeered at him behind his back, and he named a committee (including her uncle the Duke of Norfolk) to report upon her conduct. They found

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her guilty; Cranmer, the Archbishop—whose career she had made, for he was her creature—declared null and void the very marriage between Henry and Anne which he had himself consecrated three years before; and on May 19, 1536, Anne was beheaded in the Tower. Henry married Jane Seymour immediately after.

**The Seymours.** Jane Seymour's father was a country gentleman with a manor-house on the southern edge of Savernake Forest (Wolf Hall), in Wiltshire. He was known at court, and Henry would visit his country house sometimes when hunting. His two eldest sons, who were energetic men, were already at court; Edward, the elder, was now not far from thirty, and Thomas, his younger brother, was with him. These two young men saw an opportunity in the attraction which their sister (who had for some time been a maid of honour) exercised over Henry. They were later to use this attraction to great purpose. Jane Seymour bore Henry a son, who was later to be the boy-King Edward VI, on October 12, 1537. But she died as the result of the birth. Here was a male heir at last, about whose legitimacy there could be no question, and this advent of the little Prince was to give the Seymours a special position at court.

**The Dissolution of the Smaller Monasteries.** Just after the execution of Anne Boleyn and the rise of the Seymours came that capital event in English history known as the dissolution of the monasteries, though the long-drawn-out action included a much wider loot than that of the religious houses, for there were also confiscated hospitals and guilds, schools and corporate property of every kind, before the thing was over. Even the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge only narrowly escaped—had King Henry lived a few weeks longer they would have gone the way of the rest, for the proposal to dissolve them was already drawn up when he died.

The idea of dissolving a monastery had been familiar for a long time past; by licence from the Pope a corporation of this kind might be suppressed by Government, the monks put into other houses, and the endowment of the place used for some other purpose similar to that which it had hitherto served—as, for instance, amalgamation with other monasteries or the founding of a college. We have seen that many small monasteries were thus dissolved with Papal licence by Wolsey for

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the building of his great new college at Oxford. Public opinion in England therefore could be easily hoodwinked when Cromwell suddenly proposed to suppress the smaller houses—reckoning as smaller houses those, close on four hundred in number, which had incomes under what we should call to-day £5000 a year. Their average income was about £2000. There was thus at one blow swept into the royal treasury something like a million pounds a year of our money; for to the rental value of the monasteries must be added their buildings and jewels, furniture, etc., all of which was seized by Cromwell for the Crown. The excuse for this action was a report drawn up during 1535 on the lax morals and corruption of these smaller houses. The list of enormities contained in this report defeats its own object. That there was often great laxity and in some cases depravity is only what was to be expected from the condition of the Church at the time. But that the state of affairs was anything like what Cromwell's servants set forth is disproved by the fact that after the dissolution committees of local gentry, set up by the Government to license the former monks to undertake secular work, granted such licences to nearly all of them, and testified to their good character in each case.

**The First Religious Rebellion (called the Pilgrimage of Grace).** Although public opinion had been confused as to the motives and results of such a move as the suppression of the smaller monasteries, Cromwell was himself so much detested that there was a widespread anxiety and ill-ease. It was instinctively felt that, although the monks and nuns had—so far—been allowed to join the larger houses, this might only be a step towards the general loot of religion. When therefore Cromwell's agents began pulling down and rifling the smaller houses two important risings took place, both of them, naturally, in districts far from the capital, where it was difficult to suppress the beginnings of the movement. These risings were badly handled and ill-co-ordinated, though they commanded very large numbers of men. There was first a gathering of some 40,000 in Lincolnshire, but they had no leaders because the gentry hung back, as the dissolution of Church property was sure to be to their advantage sooner or later. The Lincolnshire rising failed, and was followed by a more important one in Yorkshire; this *was* led by a certain number of local gentry, and was known as the Pilgrimage of Grace. Among the gentry

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who led it, however, many were lukewarm. One, Lord Darcy, betrayed it, and a minor gentleman called Aske, who was the popular leader, was later on to betray it in his turn also. The Duke of Norfolk was sent against the rebels, marching from Doncaster in October with about 8000 men, which was not one-fifth of what he had to meet. Henry was badly frightened. He opened negotiations. He empowered the Duke of Norfolk to accept the rebel terms, which were: (1) a Parliament to be held at York, (2) the monks to be restored, and (3) a general pardon to be given. This solemn promise was given in December. But when the Government had had time to gather forces and found itself strong enough it broke its word and vastly increased the existing terror by savage massacres throughout the North of England under the authority of this same Duke of Norfolk. The country was so cowed that the North did not move again to save the national religion until its second rising (which also failed), more than thirty years later.

**The Dissolution of the Greater Houses.** The rebellions in defence of religion which came so near to success gave by their defeat a vastly added power to Cromwell. There was instituted a special instrument of government for the North called the Council of the North, which continued for generations, and as a certain number of the larger monasteries had been involved in the rebellion Cromwell could strike against them. This was what had been at the back of his mind all the time; the larger monasteries represented four times as much annual revenue as the smaller monasteries did; there would be immense perquisites for Cromwell himself and for his agents and abettors among the gentry, and a vast increase of revenue for the Crown. The greater monasteries involved in this rising were destroyed by Act of Attainder, and their abbots executed for treason; when these first had gone down the rest fell one after the other. They were not suppressed as the smaller monasteries had been; they were either destroyed under the plea of treason or their surrender was demanded. By March 23, 1540, the last of the great houses disappeared; this was the Abbey of Waltham, which Harold had founded before the Conquest.

Many other corporate endowments were seized then or somewhat later, notably the hospitals; everything which had

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been seized on the pretext of religious reform was plundered in the ensuing years. Further, endowments not corporate but designed for the support of the Church at large were robbed unmercifully. Such great slices, for instance, were taken out of the endowment of the Archbishopric of Canterbury that it was reckoned to have sunk in twenty years by two-thirds, and this went on with every bishopric in England. Canonries and prebends, schools and every sort of religious or semi-religious endowment, were looted on all sides.

**The Consequences of the Dissolution.** The immediate consequences of the dissolution of the monasteries were two. First, great areas were deprived of the full pomp and splendour of religious service, which could now only be found in the cathedral towns, but had formerly been present every few miles throughout the country. Religion went on just as before and in theory was unchanged, but one of its main sources of strength was gone, and there was a corresponding increase in the hopes and power of the now growing party of the Reformers. These were still only a very small minority, but they had the sympathy of many of the greater gentry, notably the Seymours, who now saw that an attack on religion in general was accompanied by an increase in their wealth.

The second immediate result was an immense increase in the revenue of the Government. Had this been maintained the English Crown would have become the most powerful of its kind in Christendom, for elsewhere the loot of religion had gone not to a national Government, but to petty princes or town governments. But, in point of fact, in England the Crown did not keep this large increase of revenue. Much of it was already captured on the way to the Treasury by the agents of the great plunder; Wriothesley, for instance, who was secretary to that part of the civil service which gathered in the spoils of the dissolution, took a number of abbeys for himself. So did Thomas Cromwell; and Thomas Cromwell endowed his nephew Richard Williams (his sister's son) with lands from many monastic estates. This nephew, having thus suddenly become a millionaire, often called himself by his uncle's name, Cromwell; and the famous Oliver was his son's grandson. But the Crown in 1540 was still keeping the greater part of the spoils, which later the false policy of the wars at the end of the reign lost. Much of the property had been given

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away through the caprice of Henry, or to buy the support of the wealthier classes, but more of the rest was sold at ruinous prices in order to obtain money quickly under the strain of military expense, especially during the French expedition at the very close of the reign.

Thus the main consequence of the dissolution of the monasteries was the impoverishment of the Crown and the great increase in economic power of the landed classes. These from the next generation onward became more and more important as against the declining power of the King; at the end of a century the landed gentry of England were to destroy that kingly government, and were to take over power.

**The Fall of Cromwell.** In spite of the dissolution of the monasteries, Cromwell expected and feared a reconciliation with Rome. The King had in two documents (known as "the Six Articles" and "the Ten Articles"<sup>1</sup>) affirmed orthodoxy with all his strength, and enforced it with all his power. Catherine was dead, a legitimate heir had been born, Anne Boleyn had long disappeared.

The Papacy had bungled the occasion somewhat. Paul III had given a Cardinal's hat to Reginald Pole, that strongly Catholic half-royalty who had fled into exile for safety and in whose testimony we have the best account of the religious revolution in England. He had been made Legate with the special object of attacking Henry, and this had been done before the Prince and heir to the throne had been born. On the other hand, the Pope was bound to excommunicate Henry after his destruction of the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury and his scattering of the saint's relics. But the Bull of Excommunication was futile, for no one could carry it out; and a second mission given to Pole failed. Even after that excommunication, however, a chance of ending the schism remained, and Cromwell took action to prevent it.

**The Marriage with Anne of Cleves.** Cromwell proposed to ally Henry, by a new marriage, with the Protestant German princes who were now firmly planting the Reformation abroad. He chose for a candidate the sister of the Duke of Cleves, a

<sup>1</sup> The legend that the Ten Articles were a sop to the Reformers disappears on an examination of them. They were wholly orthodox from beginning to end. The Six Articles were even exaggeratedly so: under them, for instance, confession became for the first (and last) time in history compulsory under the civil law!

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man not particularly anti-Catholic, but one whose name stood for the anti-Catholic cause and who was in antagonism to the Emperor, who was the champion of orthodoxy. Cromwell represented this woman—a fat, good-natured nonentity, quite uncultured, but of the kindly Rhineland sort—as a great beauty, and, as was always the case with those who for the moment had control of Henry, he did what he liked with the King. It was on January 1, 1540, that Henry met her near Rochester as she came up from landing to be married. He was shocked at her appearance, and, personal and petty as the incident was, it determined the fall of Cromwell.

Cromwell had many enemies, not only as a moneylender on a large scale, but as being all-powerful and therefore arousing the jealousy of the Seymours, who desired to control the King and were on their way to succeeding.

It was typical of Henry's irresolution and weakness that he could not make up his mind. On April 17, 1540, Cromwell, who had helped Henry with the evidence he required to dissolve the marriage with Anne of Cleves, was made Earl of Essex and Great Chamberlain. But within two months, on June 10, Norfolk, as the head of the Howards and the old nobility, who detested Cromwell as an upstart, denounced him in the Council; he was arrested, his property was seized, and in less than three weeks a Bill of Attainder—his own favourite method of putting people away—was formed against him. He pleaded for his life in the most abject fashion, but on July 28 the wretched man, a prey to the most violent panic, was put to death. Just over a week later Henry, having got the clergy to declare his marriage with Anne of Cleves invalid, brought to Court as his new Queen the Duke of Norfolk's niece, the young Catherine Howard.

**The Fall of the Howards and the Triumph of the Seymours.** Cranmer was working with the Seymours, and especially with Edward Seymour, the elder and more energetic of the two brothers, for strengthening as far as possible the now growing Protestant element among the few who were candidates for real power in the state and the comparatively small anti-Catholic faction in the higher clergy. Evidence was gathered of the unchastity of the young Queen, Catherine, before marriage; Cranmer presented it to the King, who was filled with weak rage and infuriated, as having been made a dupe once more and turned to ridicule before his people. He wept publicly,

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issued an absurd order that no one should ridicule him in the taverns of the capital, and put his new young wife, who after all had not been unfaithful to him, to death on February 13, 1541; he also imprisoned the Duke of Norfolk, his mother, and the father of the late Queen. Henceforward he fell more and more into the power of the Seymours.

**The Quarrel with France and Scotland.** Henry also ruined the Treasury and added to the confusion and chaos of the time by a last piece of unbalanced caprice—a further war with France and Scotland. He had lost his temper with his young nephew James V of Scotland, the son of his sister Mary, because that King had remained strongly attached to the Holy See. Of course, Scotland was the ally of France, and had always maintained this French alliance as the guarantee of her national independence; and James had married Mary of Lorraine, the daughter of the house of Guise, the first power in the French kingdom. Cardinal Beaton, Archbishop of St Andrews, was the support both of the Crown and also of the orthodox religion in Scotland; but already Calvinism had struck root and was soon to support the Scottish nobles in a revolution. Against Scotland Henry was successful, for though an invasion failed, and though he did not succeed in getting Cardinal Beaton murdered (as he tried to do), the young Scottish King in a counter-invasion was disastrously defeated at Solway Moss on November 25, 1542. He died of grief shortly afterwards, leaving as heiress to the throne a newborn baby girl named Mary. But Henry failed in the effort to get a contract of marriage between this newborn baby and his little heir, now five years old, for the Scottish national feeling was too strong for him.

As for the war with France, of which the war with Scotland was a part, it was a military success and a national disaster. Boulogne was captured and its inhabitants massacred in the middle of September 1544, but the war had cost by that time as much as three years' whole revenue of the monastic lands! The currency was ruined (what we call to-day 'going off gold'), the coinage was debased with alloy, prices consequently rose and added to the confusion of society. And, what was worse, the monastic lands now began to pass in great blocks, by forced sale, from the Crown to the landed classes. Meanwhile, before he died, Henry had the satisfaction of hearing that the Scottish Calvinists had succeeded in murdering Cardinal Beaton.

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**The Policy in Ireland and Wales.** Henry VIII's reign must be remembered for a certain consolidation of English power in Wales and Ireland. In Wales, which the Tudors regarded as their native place, a more regular administration was established; the country was organized into twelve shires, which still exist, and twelve boroughs were recognized for the purposes of sending members to Parliament. Ireland was not as yet 'planted'; it was still left largely to its own traditions, but the power of the English Crown was much advanced; the title of the King was changed from Lord of Ireland to King of Ireland after the breach with the Papacy, and there was an increasing substitution of English law for the old tribal law. It was Henry's artillery which gave him this new power; with this he captured Maynooth, the castle of the FitzGerald, who were by far the most powerful Irish family (the Geraldines), and, having goaded the heir, known as Silken Thomas, into a rebellion, captured him and his uncles by treachery at a banquet to which they had been invited by Henry's agents. Silken Thomas and his five uncles were all butchered at Tyburn without trial or defence on February 3, 1537, four years before the title "King of Ireland" was assumed, for the Geraldines were as much supporters of the Papacy as they were rebels against Henry.

But there was no emphasis on Henry's schism, and in many parts of Ireland the monasteries, though largely suppressed, continued. It is significant that five years before Henry died the Jesuits, who were everywhere to be the strength of the reaction against the Reformation, had already appeared in Ireland.

**Marriage with Catherine Parr, and Death.** In the middle of 1543 Henry, a widower since the execution of Catherine Howard, more than two years before, married as a sort of nurse for his last years Catherine Parr. She was in touch with the Reformers and with Cranmer, but had little influence. Henry maintained full orthodoxy, save in the matter of the Papacy, till his death; he had personally presided over trials for heresy, and had issued a book called *The King's Book* strongly emphasizing and supporting all Catholic doctrine and particularly the doctrine of the Real Presence. He also insisted that the vernacular translation of the Bible should be orthodox, to the exclusion of the heretical version of Tyndale. This was before Cromwell had fallen, and Cranmer and Cromwell

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between them had characteristically duped Henry, for Tyndale's version was foisted on the nation under a false name.

The last months of Henry's life were abominable. His body had swollen unnaturally, the disease from which he suffered for so many years had thoroughly corrupted it, and in his weakness he fell more than ever under the power of the Seymours. They saw to it that they should have the custody of the heir, the boy Edward, after the old King's death; they overlooked the drawing up of his will, and they procured sentence of death against the Howards. On December 2, 1546, the Earl of Surrey, the Duke of Norfolk's heir, was arrested, partly for having said in private conversation that he should claim the regency after Henry's death, and partly on the absurd ground that he had quartered the royal arms—the Howards had borne the same arms since they came into the royal succession of Brotherton more than a century earlier. Surrey was put to death on January 19; much of his wealth was given to the Seymours and their clique, and most of it went to the elder brother, Edward Seymour, who was now Earl of Hertford. A Bill of Attainder was brought against the old Duke of Norfolk. He was to be put to death on January 28, but early in the morning of that day Henry himself died, and the Duke was saved.

### EDWARD VI

**Power seized for the Sake of Plunder.** On the death of Henry VIII the group surrounding the Seymours seized power with the object of enriching themselves as rapidly as possible, for the future was all uncertain. The unhealthy child of barely nine years old who was now to be nominally King, under the title of Edward VI, had been born at a moment in his father's life when Henry's disease was full upon him; the boy could not live long, and what would follow no man could say. At the head of the conspiracy for seizing power was, of course, the Earl of Hertford, Edward Seymour, but all the group combined to make the most of their brief opportunity.

Henry's will, drawn up under the Seymour influence, was irregularly executed, but accepted. It appointed a Council, who were to rule during Edward's minority; it directed that if Edward should die without heir Mary should come next in succession, although Henry had made Parliament declare her illegitimate; and that if Mary should die without issue her half-

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sister Elizabeth, whom Henry had also had declared illegitimate, should succeed in her turn. If Elizabeth should have no issue the descendants of Henry's younger sister, Mary (who had been Queen of France and then married the Duke of Suffolk), were to succeed. He made no mention of the Scottish branch, although this was descended from his elder sister, Margaret.

The Council nominated in the will was sixteen in number, and it was Henry's intention that they should be all equal. The principal members beside Edward Seymour, Lord Hertford, were Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Paget, the Secretary, Wriothesley, the Chancellor, Russell, who had rapidly acquired one of the greatest of the new fortunes out of the loot of religion, and Herbert, who was a principal official attendant upon Henry in person. Most of these men were known to be in favour of continuing the religious revolution which had already so largely enriched them, though none of them had any religious feeling, save Cranmer. Cranmer, who alone was indifferent to money, was violently anti-Catholic, though he had concealed his feelings from Henry. It was remarkable that among the rest Henry included Tunstall, the Bishop of Durham, who had stood out for orthodoxy so boldly during the first moves for the supremacy.

The King had died on a Friday morning; the conspirators kept the death secret all Saturday and all Sunday, giving Seymour time to get hold of the little Prince and bring him up from Hatfield. At last on Monday, January 31, the death was 'released.' Paget read parts of the will to the House of Lords, and the Council took a public oath solemnly to keep the provisions of the will in every detail.

They at once proceeded to break their oath. Paget and Edward Seymour (Hertford), who had already made an arrangement between them the night before Henry died, suggested that the Earl of Hertford be made head of the state and given full royal power, subject only to the consent of the Council. After this the Council proceeded to give themselves new and grander titles and to pocket large sums of public money, which they declared the late King had promised them. Edward Seymour was to be a Duke, and was to get about £25,000 a year more than he already had, with a further eight or nine thousand a year to be looted from the first bishopric which should fall vacant. Then Paget said that he had been set down for ten to twelve thousand

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a year extra—and so on. Dudley, the vastly wealthy son of that Dudley who had been tax-gatherer for Henry VII, became Earl of Warwick; Wriothesley, with his very large fortune out of monastic land, became Lord Southampton; Edward Seymour, now Lord Protector and head of the state, became Duke of Somerset. It will be remembered that the title of Duke connoted a connection with royalty.

**The Divine Right of Kings.** On February 20 Cranmer crowned little Edward and sang High Mass himself in Westminster Abbey on that occasion, the chief interest of which was his coming forward and making the first declaration of the *Divine Right of Kings*.

This strange doctrine was a necessary corollary to the destruction of the Papal power, and the substitution of the King for the Pope as announced by Cranmer, and it was maintained for many generations after, until the breakdown of the monarchy with the expulsion of the Stuarts. This doctrine affirmed that the King of England ruled under the special authority of God, having no superior on earth, there being no appeal on earth from his decisions. It was the duty of the subject to obey him in all things without resistance.

**The Scottish Expedition.** In the summer of that first year, 1547, the Protector Somerset led a large army into Scotland by the usual coast road, Dunbar to Edinburgh. It included a number of foreign mercenaries, especially gunners, whom we shall find later helping to establish the new religion. The Scottish and English armies met just outside Edinburgh, at Pinkie, on September 4, where Somerset gained a complete victory; but after garrisoning right up to the Tay he hurried back to England, knowing the insecurity of his position in London. For it must be remembered that each member of the clique was ready to conspire against his fellows. Somerset's raid into Scotland had been undertaken with the object of weakening the power of the Guises, and the rising Calvinist faction in that country was on the English side. Henceforward for half a century, as Calvinist enthusiasm increased, it worked for the destruction of the old Scottish national independence and indirectly for the object which every successive English Government kept in mind—the subjection of Scotland to England.

**The Attempt at Religious Revolution.** The disappearance of Henry VIII, who was as strongly attached to Catholic

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practice as the mass of his people, strengthened the forces making for a religious revolution.

Numerically the supporters of those forces were still a small minority, but they were a very important minority; they included a considerable proportion of the best-instructed men, especially among the higher clergy, the scholars, and the officials. Every one who had tasted the loot of the Church and hoped to get more was potentially upon the side of a religious revolution; most of those in authority were actively upon that side.

Further, the convinced anti-Catholics outside the governing clique had a driving-power the like of which was not to be found on the other side. They might be called, according to the mood of the critic, zealots, enthusiasts, or fanatics; but they were in that mood which produces the great changes in history. They were willing to die. The confused popular instinct which had expressed through rebellion its hatred of those who would attack age-long English habits in religion—the shrines, the monasteries and convents—had been met with extreme cruelty. Since the savage repression of the Pilgrimage of Grace an atmosphere of terror had become normal. Whatever Government ruled at the moment appeared to be all-powerful; so when the new Government under this new Council, with Somerset at its head, determined to launch a far more drastic attack on the traditional religion of the English it believed that it would succeed, though it knew the danger of revolt.

The test point, of course, would be the suppression of the Mass—that is, a transformation in the most sacred and fundamental religious habit of the people. This habit and all the others of pilgrimage, worship at shrines, etc., were, for the bulk of men, matters of routine, though affection was also strongly engaged. There was no great feeling in the English populace of the day for European unity, and therefore little attachment as yet to the Papacy as necessary to Christian unity; but the suppression of the Mass would be an act affecting intimately the general domestic life of Englishmen.

The religious revolutionaries were not numerous anywhere as yet, but were strongest in London and in the seaports; especially in those of the south and east, which were most open to foreign influence, for we must always remember that to the average Englishman of the middle sixteenth century (1540-70) Protestantism was still a foreign, anti-national thing.

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The decision to eradicate the Mass was taken, then, by Somerset, Grey, Duke of Suffolk, Russell, and the others, who desired to complete that great increase in their fortunes which the destruction of the monasteries had begun. But they saw that the thing would have to be done by stages, though the stages would have to follow one upon the other fairly rapidly, for time pressed. The diseased little boy, Edward the King, had been trained in the full Calvinist spirit; even when he grew older there would be no opposition from him. But everybody knew what a bad life it was to depend upon: he might die at any time, and would most probably die early.

The first step was the introduction of a new Liturgy in the English tongue. It was hoped that if this were to be, in its first stages, little more than a translation of the Mass, with such doctrinal changes as were introduced concealed in the form of words used, the thing would go through. A Prayer Book was prepared; the new service was to begin on Whit Sunday, June 9, of the year 1549, two years and a half after Henry's death, which was, they thought, a sufficient interval of delay.

But the calculation was erroneous. The butcheries of only twelve years ago kept the North cowed, but elsewhere violent rebellions broke out. There were popular risings in the Severn valley, in the Midlands, in East Anglia, in Wiltshire, and even in the Home Counties and the West Country. In the latter a considerable force was gathered and marched on Exeter. These risings were confused and ill-organized, ill-armed. They were not efficiently led—because the gentry, as in the former Pilgrimage of Grace, felt their interest to be on the other side. Also, these popular rebellions were mixed up with a great deal which was only indirectly connected with the attempted religious change; they were fed by hatred of the enclosure of common land and by a general discontented feeling that the religious revolution would—as, ~~Three~~ it did—depress the masses to the advantage of the rich. Violent and almost universal throughout the south and the Midlands as these movements were, they could not succeed against the organization opposed to them—the united forces of the Government and, above all, *its trained foreign mercenaries, German and Italian, and its artillery*. Russell relieved Exeter, which the western rising had besieged; his mounted Germans and veteran Italian soldiers did what they willed with the unarmed mob of English countrymen, and of

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this western rebellion alone 4000 were massacred. In Oxfordshire Grey, who felt all his large, increased fortune to be at stake, went through like a pitiless machine, hanging priests from their own steeples right and left, and by the autumn of 1549 the flame of revolt had been crushed down. The new Liturgy in English was precariously established, *still calling itself the Mass*, and the first step was thus successfully concluded.

**The Fall of Somerset.** Meanwhile the quarrels between the men who had imposed their tyranny upon England led to the fall of Somerset. He had hoped to save himself by demagoguery, expressing his sympathy with the resistance to the enclosures of common land. This was treason to his fellow-robbers, and they suppressed him. The leader of those who were for deposing the Protector was Dudley, Lord Warwick; he and his party were the more determined to get rid of the Protector because he had recently put to death his own brother, Thomas Seymour, who had been intriguing for power on his own account. This brother had married Henry's widow, Catherine Parr (she had died in childbirth), and had approached too familiarly the young Princess Elizabeth, an obvious candidate for the throne when her brother, the sickly boy who was nominally reigning, should die. If Somerset could put to death his own brother no one was safe. The Protector still had possession of the royal person, and he tried to use that possession to save himself, but in that he failed. Cranmer abandoned him, and he was imprisoned in October 1549.

**The Appearance of William Cecil.** There now appears in the turmoil a name which was to be of the very first importance in English history—that of William Cecil.

This man was a political genius of the highest order. He should count not only in the history of England, but of Europe, in the same category as Bismarck and Richelieu, and it was ultimately to him that the completion of the religious revolution was due. He was industrious, very secretive, farseeing, understanding men and motives, and prepared to wait. He was still quite young, not yet thirty, already fairly well-to-do, though still of the middle class—the son of one of Henry's favourite civil servants. He was highly educated, not only through his university training, but through his own general reading; and he had taken his own place in the civil service after his father, attached himself to Somerset, and had recently become his

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secretary and right-hand man. When Somerset was imprisoned Cecil went to prison with him, but he was soon released, and after Somerset's abject surrender—throwing himself on the mercy of Warwick and sacrificing great masses of the fortune he had accumulated—Cecil ratted to the new power and was made Secretary to the Council. He was necessary to Warwick and the others because he alone knew all about Somerset's affairs. At the same time, now that he was Secretary to the Council he would know all about Warwick's affairs and those of the rest. Having thus become possessed of all the secrets of the conspirators, as he was already possessed of all the secrets of Somerset, he was indispensable—and henceforward he gets richer and richer. Soon Warwick, in his turn, took the royal title of Duke, calling himself Northumberland, which title is not to be confused with that of the Percies, Earls of Northumberland and at the moment under attainder for their share in the earlier rebellion against Cromwell. Indeed, it was the note of the whole Tudor time to get rid as much as possible of the old families, their place being taken by the new Reformation fortunes.

**Cecil betrays Somerset.** The new great step in the rise of William Cecil was due to his betrayal of his former master, Somerset, who had put all his secrets into Cecil's hands. The new Protector, Warwick, did not feel safe so long as the old Protector, Somerset, was alive, in spite of the latter's complete submission, and when it was proposed to put that old Protector to death the unfortunate man appealed to Cecil, now Secretary of the Council, to save him. When Cecil answered that he only hoped the accusations against him were not true, Somerset knew that the end had come. He was put to death in January 1552, and Cecil, as Secretary to the Council, was the moving spirit in all that followed.

The time was now thought ripe for completing the religious reformation, desperately unpopular though it was. The slaughter and execution which had followed on the suppression of the popular risings made Cranmer and the Government now feel safe, and a second Prayer Book was devised, quite different from the first, wholly transforming the Liturgy and destroying the last traditions of the Mass. Cranmer had used for the production of this Prayer Book a quantity of his foreign friends—the Pole Lasco, the Alsatian Bucer, the Italian Vermigli, the

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Frenchman Alexandre, and with them Fallio, Florio, Utenhof, Memelio, etc. But the admirable prose of the new Liturgy seems to have been mainly Cranmer's own. The Real Presence was denied in good set terms, and all the old order and character of the Mass disappeared. In the place of it came a set of prayers from which the Communion was separated, and that Communion did not recognize the Body and Blood of Christ as really present and worthy of adoration in the Sacrament.

A new Creed was also prepared by Cranmer. It consisted in forty-two Articles (the parents of the present thirty-nine), and was passed by Convocation on March 2, 1553. In connection with this new Creed Cranmer proposed a new penal code, proposing to punish as heretics—that is, to burn—not only those who admitted Papal supremacy, but those who believed in Transubstantiation and those who maintained the efficacy of good works. It must be remarked that the new Prayer Book had no time to be thoroughly imposed—it was only being gradually introduced throughout England when Edward died and the return to the old national religion began.

**Northumberland (Dudley, formerly Warwick) makes a Bid for a Change of Dynasty in Favour of his own Family.** The diseased boy-King Edward passed his fifteenth birthday in the autumn of that year, 1552, and it was already clear that he had not long to live. Northumberland arranged a marriage between his son Guildford Dudley and Lady Jane Grey, the granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary. It will be remembered that Henry in his will had left the crown, failing issue from his own children, to the issue of this sister. Now, Mary had left an heiress by her husband, the Duke of Suffolk, and this heiress had married Grey, Lord Dorset, who was later made Duke of Suffolk also; Lady Jane Grey was the eldest daughter of that marriage and the heiress to the claims of Mary's line.

The marriage between her and young Dudley took place on Whit Sunday, May 31, 1553, when she was not yet sixteen, and her husband only a year older than herself. The young King was persuaded by Northumberland to make a will leaving the crown to Lady Jane. The dying lad's intense anti-Catholicism was worked upon: he knew that on his death the next monarch (by his father's will) would be his half-sister, the very Catholic Princess Mary, and the sickly boy honestly thought that no greater disaster could come to England than having a Catholic

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upon the throne. Edward was made to recite the illegitimacy of his half-sisters Mary and Elizabeth (they were still illegitimate by law, for Henry had made them so), but in the original draft of the will Lady Jane was *not* made heir to the throne; only her sons (should any be born) were made heirs. However, Northumberland changed the phrase so that Lady Jane herself was made heir.<sup>1</sup> There would then rule England, after Edward's approaching death, a new dynasty, the dynasty of Dudley. Parliament had not yet met, but the judges in anticipation of it accepted the King's new will, and the instrument was signed in the same month by the Council, Cecil's name among them as Secretary, and Cranmer's at the head of the list. Mary was sent for at the end of June 1553—had she come to court she would have been imprisoned and probably killed.

**The Death of Edward.** But a week later, on Thursday, July 6, 1553, in the evening, young Edward died.

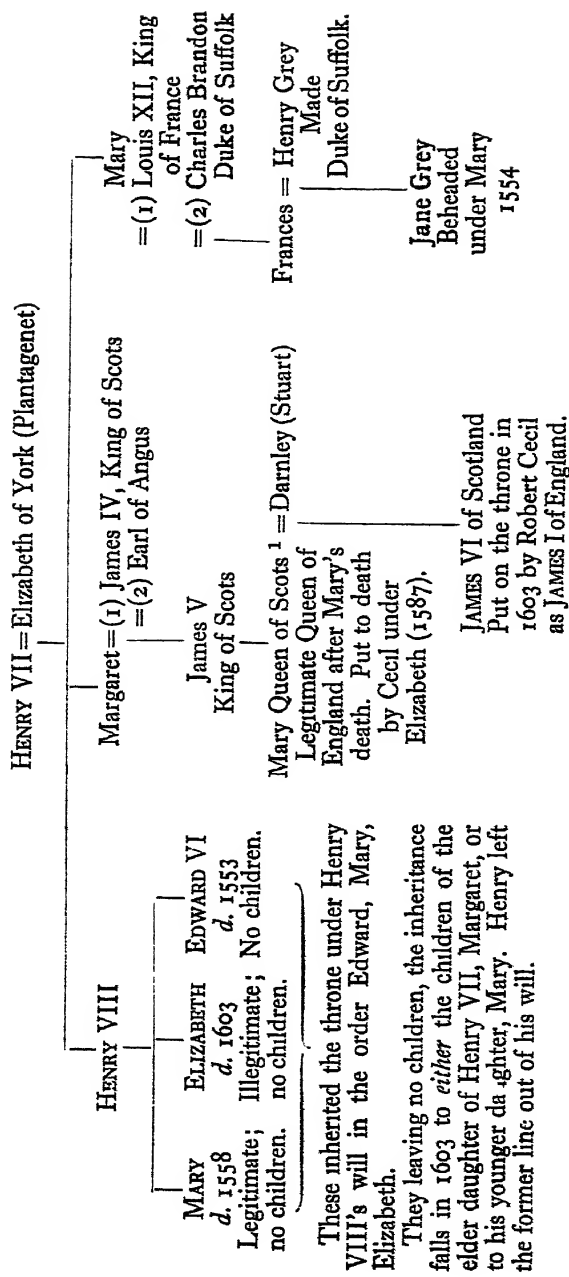
### MARY

**Third Great Popular Rising for Catholicism.** After Edward's death the Council passed the night preparing to change the dynasty, for if Mary were to succeed in the place of Lady Jane Grey (who was now the heiress by law, for, though Parliament had not met, the judges had accepted her, and the King's will agreed to by the Council was sufficient) all the new revolutionary system would crumble. Their action in supporting the change of dynasty would make them traitors liable to death, and their huge new fortunes would also be ultimately imperilled, for the looting of the Church might be partially revoked. Luckily for Mary Tudor, some one on the Council cautiously hedged, and secretly sent her word of her brother's death.

Mary was now a woman of thirty-seven, stunted in figure, suffering from very bad health, with a head too large for her body and a deep, harsh, uncouth voice, but a gentle manner. She was, however, full of decision, and it was a question of saving her life. She rode that same Thursday night almost as far as Cambridge, and by Sunday she was at Kenning Hall. From there she wrote to the Council, insisting that she was

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland did it cleverly by altering one letter and adding two words. The phrase "Lady Jane's heirs male" became "Lady Jane and her heirs male."

## THE TUDOR INHERITANCE



<sup>1</sup> The only ground for passing her over was that the descendants of Margaret Tudor were left out of Henry VIII's will.

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Queen. The Council answered unanimously that Lady Jane Grey was Queen, Cranmer again signing first as Primate, and Cecil as Secretary. Lady Jane's father, formerly Grey, now Duke of Suffolk, was ordered to go out and capture Mary, but he was frightened of the consequences, and Northumberland undertook the task himself, and thought it ominous that as he passed out of London the people in the streets saw him pass in silence. Mary had reached Framlingham, in Norfolk, riding forty miles from Kenning Hall, in the same county, to be near the East Coast and so in touch with her cousin the Emperor; the ships had been ordered to prevent her escape and had mutinied, and the common people began pouring in from all sides to help her. The gentry, as usual, hung back at first from this popular demonstration of Catholic feeling, but Mary was soon at the head of a very large and formidable force. The popular feeling was so evident on all sides and was rising to such a pitch that the Council was swamped. They determined one after the other to betray Northumberland. Ridley, one of the most anti-Catholic among the higher clergy, preached a final sermon on July 16 in favour of Lady Jane, but it was the last effort. Northumberland made a desperate effort to save the situation by getting French help (the French Ambassador had been a chief agent in the whole of the Lady Jane Grey movement), and he offered to give the French King Calais as the price of his aid; but it was too late, and Mary, with the whole people behind her, was in London by August 3; her half-sister Elizabeth, who would have been disinherited as much as herself if Northumberland's plot had succeeded, rode at the Queen's side.

**Mary's Difficulties.** Although the resistance to the Council had broken down and they had abandoned Northumberland, Mary's position would be difficult. Ridley had thrown himself at her feet and implored her mercy; Cecil had acted after his kind, and not only implored her mercy, but thoroughly betrayed his colleagues—giving her details of what had passed in the Council, to which he was secretary. As for his own support of Lady Jane Grey, he accounted for it simply enough by saying that he had been a coward. But Mary could only work through a Council, and she could not make a Council entirely new; she had to use the principal men of the realm. Now, all these had been her enemies, and the fortunes of all of

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them were founded upon the loot of Church wealth. She proceeded to a general pardon—excepting Northumberland, of course. She withdrew Cecil from the Council, but continued to use him for public work, and he was ready to conform to and accept Catholicism. She made a new Council; but it was much too large to be serviceable because it was necessary that she should include new men who were on her side, and yet use many of her old enemies as well.

At the head of the Government Mary put Gardiner, as Chancellor. He had always been Catholic-minded in the tradition of Henry VIII, and though he had worked so thoroughly with that King for the schism, events both at home and abroad had shown him how essential the Papacy was to the preservation of Catholicism. Mary would have the English people behind her in an overwhelming majority for the establishment of the national religion; but the anti-Catholic minority had grown somewhat larger and much bolder during the last six years. London, the capital, had a more numerous minority of active Protestants than the average of the kingdom, and Mary knew well that to the landed classes the success of Protestantism, through a religious revolution, promised security for their new wealth, while the restoration of the old national religion would make them all feel insecure in their new fortunes. Nevertheless she could not but act in conformity with the national will which had put her upon the throne; she had the great advantage of being Tudor, she had all her life been popular—in her youth the idol of the people—and the Mass had been continuous in England for century upon century, save during the execrated and criminal chaos of the last four years. She could therefore have no hesitation in seeing to it that the national religion should be restored, but she knew what the open and the secret resistance would be.

**Guarantee against France.** The second object before Mary Tudor was one of foreign policy. The great foreign danger to England was the strength of the French monarchy, the immediate neighbour across the Channel and always one threatening to recapture Calais. The other great power, the rival of France, the Habsburg house, with the Emperor at its head and including the power of Spain—by far the wealthiest of the European countries at that time and the best equipped in ships and men—did not threaten England, while the power of

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France did. And the threat had now grown acute because the little Queen of Scotland—which country was England's hereditary enemy—had been taken to France and there engaged to the son and heir of the French King. With France and England's ancient enemy united under one crown to the north and to the south, England would indeed be in peril. Should the Queen meet that peril by a foreign marriage, allying herself with the Emperor through wedding his son Philip, Prince of Spain, or in some other fashion?

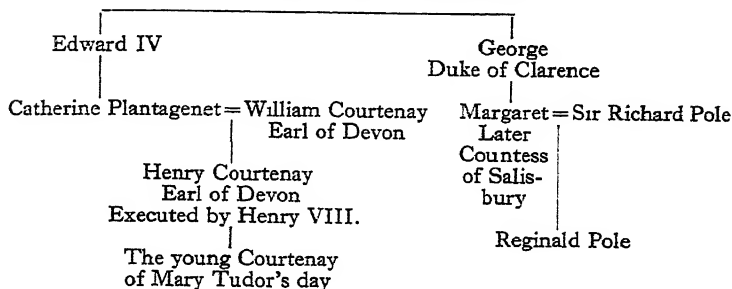
**The Question of the Royal Marriage.** Gardiner, the strongly Catholic-minded Bishop of Winchester whom Mary had made her Chancellor—that is, head of the Government—was intensely English. He was especially national in his detestation of heresy, in which feeling the great bulk of his fellow-Englishmen agreed with him, and he was also inclined with them to fear a foreign marriage. Here he followed his instinct rather than his reason, for reason was all in favour of a royal alliance with the Habsburgs to preserve England from the danger of France and Scotland, now combined. Gardiner then urged Mary to make a native marriage, and to wed some Englishman.

There had recently been released from the Tower one Edward Courtenay, a direct Plantagenet in blood. His grandmother, Catherine, was the daughter of Edward IV; she had married Courtenay, the Earl of Devon. Her son had been beheaded by Henry VIII as part of the general Tudor policy of destroying the Plantagenets, and *his* son was this young man, twenty-seven years of age. Such a marriage would have strengthened the Throne, and had there been children it would have revived the still surviving feeling for the Plantagenet dynasty. And, above all, it would have been English. But Mary after some hesitation refused the match because she was disgusted with the young man's debauchery. Then there was some talk of Pole, who had played so great a part in her father's later reign and who was equally a Plantagenet—being the grandson of Clarence, Edward IV's brother. His mother had also been put to death by Henry in his policy of getting rid of the Plantagenets: he stood for the strictest orthodoxy, and, as we have seen, had been used to further the Papal policy in England. But a match with him would have left doubts upon the succession, for he was very nearly sixteen years older than

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Mary, and she herself was in her thirty-eighth year. At last Mary, at the end of October 1553, made up her mind to marry her cousin Philip, the Prince of Spain, who was much the same age as Courtenay. And she was urged to this course by the majority of her Council, against the advice of Gardiner.

### THE DESCENT OF CARDINAL POLE



**The Counter-Reformation.** The reaction against the Reformation was now in full swing. It had come tardily, because not even the most extreme Reformers nor those who most clearly saw the danger of the new religious enthusiasm had appreciated that there was a danger of destroying Christendom. Half a lifetime had passed since the first upheaval in Germany, but the violent debates had been so confused and those who took part in them were of such varied enthusiasms and in such different degrees of revolt against the old traditional religion that it took a long time before the two camps were drawn up. The Papacy was very slow to defend its cause, for it believed the movement to be a passing one, and it dreaded the calling of a General Council. General Councils had in the immediate past almost supplanted the Papacy. And, on the other hand, the Protestant Reformers were not keen on a General Council either, for it would overwhelmingly have condemned their tenets and might even, had it been called early enough, have proclaimed a crusade against them. Then there was the difficulty of knowing where a General Council should be called; wherever it met it would be under the domination of some temporal prince—and all princes were asserting their individual power too much for the Papacy. Further, it would be difficult to make the Council a full one. England until Mary's accession would

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not have joined it, and France and the Empire were in acute rivalry. However, the Council which is known in history as the Council of Trent was at last summoned, and meanwhile the belated determination to resist the assault on the old religion strengthened.

A powerful ally to the cause of the Counter-Reformation was the highly disciplined order founded by St Ignatius Loyola, a Basque gentleman who had fought as a soldier in the wars between Spain and France, and who organized his followers on a military model. They came to be popularly called the Jesuits, first by their enemies and then by the world at large, and on account of their strict organization dominated more and more the working of the Counter-Reformation. On the political or temporal side the strength of the movement lay principally in the Habsburg house, but the head of it, the Emperor Charles V, was menaced continually by the Turks and had insufficient power in Germany; he had to compromise continually with the rebellious princes and the free cities, which had looted the endowment of religion and were therefore increasingly supporting the Protestant cause. Later on (in 1555), when Charles V had abdicated and divided his huge Empire between his son and his brother Ferdinand, it was his son, Philip, who stood for the Counter-Reformation. To Ferdinand went the Empire, Austria, and the German possessions; to Philip, Spain and South Italy, Milan and all the Low Countries, the Jura and, of course, the great Spanish American Empire.

**Wyatt's Rebellion.** Philip was not as yet in 1553 the very powerful monarch he was about to become after his father's abdication, but everybody knew what he soon would be. The Spanish marriage was naturally unpopular in England, especially in London, as compared with a native marriage. The French Ambassador took every advantage of the feeling. He and the whole body of malcontents worked up a rebellion to depose Mary and put Elizabeth on the throne. This rebellion had several leaders, none of whom showed energy except one of the Reformation millionaires called Wyatt, whose family had become possessed of the great wealth of the Abbey of Boxley, in Kent.

In January 1554, by which time the project of the Spanish marriage was widely known, Wyatt raised considerable forces under the promise of help from France, and marched them on London. There was a moment of panic in the Government,

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but Mary's courage carried through and she rallied them. Wyatt had the help of artillery, which was sent to him from certain Venetian ships lying in the Thames, and he also held the promise of an immediate French invasion—which failed him. He crossed the Thames above London with great courage, but as he approached the city his forces dwindled: time was all-important to him, and he therefore got ahead of his guns; finally the remnant of his men and he himself were captured. But it was a very close thing, for most of the powerful and rich men who had profited by the plunder of religion felt insecure with Mary on the throne. Wyatt was, of course, executed, and so were Lady Jane Grey's father, who helped in the rebellion, and Lady Jane Grey herself and her boy-husband, who had hitherto been spared through Mary's too lenient policy.

**The Spanish Marriage.** Her success in crushing this rebellion made Mary secure. Gardiner married her to Philip in Winchester Cathedral on July 25 following (1554), and it looked as though the cause of the Counter-Reformation in England was now secure. The people as a whole were upon the side of the old religion, though they had no strong feelings about the Papacy, but a natural affection for their traditions and their ancient worship, and a special hatred of the new great landlords whom they learned to detest during the wretched conditions of the boy-King Edward's nominal reign.

**The Reconciliation with Rome.** Pole was sent by the Pope to negotiate the reconciliation with the Holy See. The stumbling-block was the abbey lands. Apart from the very rich men who had acquired the greater part of the new wealth (the Wriothesleys, the Russells, the Pagets, the Cromwells, and the rest), there was a host of people who had bought and sold the land since the original loot, and the vested interest against the restoration of the plunder was overwhelming. Pole was authorized to say that the Pope would allow the loot of the Church lands to stand, so the landlords—that is, the House of Lords and the House of Commons—made the best of it, and accepted the policy of reconciliation, for which most of them individually were in favour so far as their private feelings were concerned and so long as their newly acquired millions were secure.

Pole landed on November 20, 1554, and within a fortnight the whole Parliament accepted the reconciliation with enthusiasm.

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Their doubts were further allayed next year by a Papal Bull confirming their possession of the Church endowments.

**The Persecution.** By this time, at the end of the year 1554, the great political question was how the security of society might be made firm and permanent. The English people had passed through a terrible seven years. There had been an attempted violent change in religion by a minority over whom there was no real King, rebellions against this attempt, and the suppression of these rebellions by massacres; an effort to change the dynasty, followed by another popular rising, and then yet another serious beginning of civil war, and then Wyatt's rebellion. Certain of the higher clergy and the greater nobility and the Council itself had acted openly against the Crown. Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, after repudiating the national religion, had supported a usurping claim against the Queen; Cecil, the secretary of the Council, had abetted it, and all the Council at one moment had done the same. The minority who were for imposing a new religion upon the English people had had one great success, though only for a short time; their numbers were not yet formidable, but their enthusiasm was, and even their numbers were growing; while every man who had benefited by the plunder of the schools, hospitals, guilds, endowments of bishoprics, canonries, and prebends, and the great mass of the monastic land, had strong reasons for sympathy with a renewal of the attack upon traditional religion in England and upon the society that went with it. Enthusiasts could be found who prayed openly for the Queen's death; there was a continued danger of revolution, and the problem was how to meet it.

The Emperor Charles V gave good advice, and it seems probable that Gardiner sympathized with that advice. This advice was that the danger should be met by prosecutions for *treason* only. Such prosecutions would apply to comparatively few people—only the great men who had conspired to change the dynasty and who were undoubtedly traitors by law (notably Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer), the higher ecclesiastics who had opposed Mary's accession, etc. The alternative policy was to prosecute not for treason, but for *heresy*. To prosecute for heresy would mean that the charges could be laid against an indefinitely large number of people—perhaps one-twelfth<sup>1</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> This was Paget's estimate at the time.

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whole nation—it would give a much less sure ground for action, for, though the nation was attached to its old customs, it was familiar by this time with the new theological speculations. A policy of prosecuting for heresy would also especially endanger the loyalty of London, where the groups of the new religion were most numerous and formed a better organized minority than anywhere else in the kingdom. Modern readers of history remark the punishment for heresy was by burning, while that for treason was *only* hanging, drawing, and quartering. Burning we think of to-day as spectacular and more likely to meet with a reaction than hanging. But to think this of the sixteenth century is to misunderstand the times. No one then, or for a hundred years afterwards, troubled about the punishment of burning; they thought it quite normal, as we to-day think penal servitude normal. And, for the matter of that, the punishment for treason, by which a man was half strangled, then cut down, mutilated, ripped up, his heart groped for in his body by the executioner while he was yet alive and pulled out, and then his dead body cut into quarters and set up in the public places, was not a fate very much more desirable than burning. Burning was the regular punishment for other crimes, such as coining and murder by women, and those who were most angered by the burning of heretics were not concerned so much with the cruelty of the punishment as with the religious motives of those who inflicted it. Cranmer himself, as we have seen, was quite prepared to burn anyone who affirmed the supremacy of the Pope or Transubstantiation. The side Mary herself took in the struggle between her husband Philip, who supported his father, and the Council we do not know, but she heartily desired the suppression of heresy, and she certainly acquiesced in the policy which was ultimately pursued.

Philip strongly supported the more politic course of prosecution for treason, but the Council were determined to show that *they* ruled, and were not to be overborne by the Queen's husband; and this desire to show that England was independent of Spain formed the leading motive for the burnings that now followed.

The first man to be burned by the Council was a zealous Protestant and former priest, called Rogers. He suffered on February 4, 1555. Five days later Hooper, the Bishop of Gloucester, who had been one of the most violent of the religious

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revolutionaries, crying out that all Catholic priests should be drowned, suffered in his turn; unlike Rogers, Hooper was popular in his own district, and his death made a considerable stir.

Philip became more certain than ever that the English Council's policy of persecuting for heresy was a mistake, and his confessor, on the very day after Hooper's execution, was put up to preach a strong sermon in the Royal Chapel against that policy. He had some effect. There was a halt of six weeks, but the determination of the Council to assert itself against Philip again prevailed, and before the end of March the burnings were resumed.

Though there were other lulls, the absence of Philip abroad (he became King of Spain and half Western Europe that same year, and had to go on the Continent to meet the menace from France) left the Council free to act as it would. In less than four years close on three hundred people were put to death in this fashion. There were no executions in the North, save one in Chester, a seaport; the great majority were in the districts under the influence of London or in East Anglia. Most counties saw nothing of the persecution, and Gardiner saw to it that there should be no burnings in his own great diocese. But it must always be remembered how very important London was to the history of England, and what the effect was on London that the continued persecution should have been so strong in the capital and its immediate neighbourhood—an average of more than one a fortnight.

**Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer.** With the autumn of that year, 1555, Ridley and Latimer were burned at Oxford on October 15. Cranmer, who had long been held a prisoner (kept back because it was thought that a recantation obtained from him would have a great effect), saw the execution from the roof of his prison close at hand. The sight profoundly affected him. A recantation was, in fact, obtained from him—and not only obtained, but repeated over and over again in stronger and stronger forms. In his last recantation he denounced himself with the greatest violence as the worst of sinners, and particularly deplored the bad example he had set. But all this was to save his life; in his heart he had hated the Catholic religion increasingly from his early manhood, and that hatred deepened as time went on. He was a great artist in prose, a man of a shrinking and nervous temperament, and those who accuse him of

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cowardice might well consider how they themselves would behave under the threat of such a death.

Moreover, the burning of Cranmer, though technically legal, was morally indefensible. He had given ample cause for the greatest rigour, but his burning was accomplished on a technicality. When first pressed to recant he had affirmed that he was willing to do so, not because he accepted the doctrines of the Catholic Church, but because he had sworn to obey the monarch who was head of the English Church, and that therefore he had to follow her in the reconciliation with Rome. The plea was technically insufficient, for it was not a full recantation of heresy, and he could therefore be condemned. Now, when once a man had been condemned as having refused to recant his life was technically forfeit, and it was inexcusable after this to urge him to recant fully, as though by so doing he could save his life. When Cranmer knew that he would be doomed in any case he rounded upon his tormentors; they put him up to read his recantation in the university church at Oxford; he took the occasion to say that all that he had hitherto said was false, and that he adhered to his former position, denying the Catholic doctrine of the Sacrament and Validity of the Mass. The day of this dramatic statement and of his death was March 21, 1556.

**The War with France. The Queen's Disappointment of a Child.** Meanwhile during 1555 the Queen and those about her confidently hoped that she was pregnant and that an heir would be born. In this she was disappointed; what she had taken for pregnancy was dropsy, and henceforward she knew that her life would be sterile and that there would be no one to come after her and take up her inheritance and policy.

The English Government joined Philip in the war against France, and English troops were present at the great Spanish victory of Saint-Quentin, which was won in the midst of an invasion of France in the August of 1557. The English Government had been persuaded to this doubtful step through the continued action of the King of France, Henri II, in actively supporting further plots for rebellion in England. Mary was to be killed, and presumably Elizabeth (who was notoriously involved in the affair) put upon the throne. Elizabeth's life was saved by the intervention of Philip. He knew that his wife Mary might not live long; on her death Mary, Queen of Scotland, married to the French King, would be the

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legitimate Queen of England, and Philip was determined that Elizabeth should take the throne instead of Mary Queen of Scots, in order to checkmate French influence in England. Elizabeth, on her side, continued to protest her violent attachment to the Catholic Faith, and was at pains to get from the Emperor all the articles needed for the Catholic ritual in her chapel; she protested to her sister that she hoped the earth might swallow her alive if she failed in her devotion to the ancient religion—but this the earth never did.

**Loss of Calais and Death of the Queen.** The English Protestant refugees in Calais were actively intriguing to surrender the town to the King of France: in this plot they failed, but the Duke of Guise, the most able of Henri II's commanders and the first man in the French kingdom, succeeded in capturing the port and citadel in the first days of the next year, 1558. The loss of Calais was a severe shock to English feeling; it was remembered against Mary's reign, and to Mary herself it was an irremediable tragedy. Her health was long broken, and by the summer it was clear that she had not long to live. She lingered on through the autumn till the beginning of the winter, giving last orders, conformable to her husband, Philip of Spain's wish that the Crown should pass to her half-sister Elizabeth. She died most piously, during the celebration of Mass in her bedroom on the early morning of November 17, 1558. A few hours later Cardinal Pole, who had been made Archbishop of Canterbury after Cranmer's death, died also.

# IX

## THE BUILDING OF PROTESTANT ENGLAND

### ELIZABETH

**William Cecil in Power.** The death of Mary put power at once into the hands of that unique statesman, William Cecil. He was now, at the end of 1558, a man at the height of his powers; just past his thirty-eighth birthday, in stature and gait a wizened, insignificant-looking creature, but his secretive face alive with intelligence. He perhaps already knew himself to possess what posterity has since discovered in him, a political genius of the highest order which ranks him, as we have seen, with those who, through their talent for intrigue, powerful will, and deep understanding of human beings, have permanently affected the history of Europe. For it was William Cecil who separated England from the rest of Christendom, gradually established the worship of nationality in place of the old religion, and, with his son Robert after him, founded a family dynasty which lasted for over fifty years. One may say that William Cecil and his son Robert were the chief makers of modern Protestant England.

There was, of course, much more at work than this one man; but it was he who made the difference. Such were his talents that he actually succeeded in transforming the nation without having to meet more than one outbreak of civil war—an outbreak which was local, and soon, with appalling cruelty, suppressed. His object in all this was no more than the pursuit of his own private fortunes; he was not of a temperament to suffer from religious feeling one way or the other; he was content to be Calvinist in the beginnings of his career when he was secretary to the Protestant Council of Edward VI, Catholic and outwardly devout under Mary. His ambition, which coincided with the care for his own pocket, was to render secure the great economic revolution which had marked the

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past twenty odd years, and on which he himself had risen from the position of a minor civil servant to a man already immensely wealthy and destined to be wealthier still.

He was by his talents, industry, and great knowledge of the whole political world (acquired as Secretary to the Council) the natural leader of the landed interest which now directed English society, and especially of the new great fortunes which had a vested interest in preventing the re-establishment of Catholicism, and whose chief members had suddenly become millionaires through their rifling of religious endowment in every form. Cecil further strengthened himself by becoming the head not only of this interest in general, but of a particular governing clique which was the nucleus thereof.

As the period (1560-1600) progresses you find, more and more, a small interrelated clique of men standing at the centre of everything: thus Nicholas Bacon (who was at once made Keeper of the Great Seal) was the brother-in-law of Cecil's wife and the father of Francis Bacon, who plays so great a part at the end of the reign; Walsingham, later on the head of Cecil's powerful and ubiquitous spy system, was the father-in-law of Essex, the last favourite of the Queen. Essex's stepfather was the earliest and most permanent favourite of the Queen; Dudley, whom she made Earl of Leicester, a younger son of that Northumberland who had tried to put Lady Jane Grey upon the throne. Another son-in-law of Walsingham's was Sir Philip Sidney, the poet, also a nephew of Leicester's. The whole of Elizabeth's reign is full of this little set of men of whom these names are examples, all closely inter-connected, sometimes quarrelling among themselves, more often allied, but especially remarkable for forming a compact and (for that matter) unpopular clique in the midst of England.

**The Accession of Elizabeth.** Circumstances favoured William Cecil, as they do every great man who establishes a policy. He knew that Elizabeth was indifferent to religion and could be made to accept the change; it was Elizabeth who came next in succession by her father's will, who had been in the public eye for long as the native Tudor heiress, and who had been nominated for the throne by Mary herself. Further, Elizabeth had in support of her accession the greatest force of the time, that of Philip of Spain, her brother-in-law. Philip and Cecil between them put Elizabeth on the throne.

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Elizabeth was at this moment (the end of 1558) a woman of just over twenty-five. She was hatchet-faced, with too high a forehead, thin lips, green eyes like her father, and red hair. She lost this red hair early in life and became completely bald but at the moment of her accession it was still fairly plentiful. Her youth pleased the people, as did her proud and determined carriage, so the new reign came in easily and Cecil was able to begin to work without hindrance.

**The Early Success of William Cecil's Plan.** The points which Cecil had to consider in his plan for changing religion with the least friction were the attitude (1) of Philip of Spain, (2) of Elizabeth herself, and (3) of the comparatively small rich class which he both served as Secretary of State and headed by reason of his talents. He had also to consider (4) the vague feelings of the populace, for what they counted.

Philip he knew would be wholly on his side, and Philip even tried to get the Pope to accept the new English Liturgy. Elizabeth's one idea would be to remain Queen; most of what Cecil did would be distasteful to her and against her will, for she despised the Protestants; but she could not afford to withstand him beyond a certain point as he held all the strings of power. The rich were naturally on Cecil's side, and though there would be bitter opposition to him from individuals, he would always be able to play one man against another—in these personal quarrels it is always the Cecils, father and son, who win. The father gets Elizabeth's own cousin and head of the old nobility, the Duke of Norfolk, put to death; and the son gets Essex, Elizabeth's dearest favourite in old age, put to death. As for the populace, they were bewildered, exhausted, and cowed, and at the same time they preferred a Tudor rule to any other.

There was still no widespread feeling among them in favour of the Papacy, there was no widespread feeling in favour of any candidate other than Elizabeth for the throne; they had risen in defence of their traditional religion and liturgy, the Mass, but they had been beaten back and thoroughly defeated; a certain number of them were becoming indifferent, while the reforming Protestant party grew in numbers and retained all the intense enthusiasm which was their driving-force. Under such circumstances the card to play, in order to rule securely without provoking revolution, was obviously to lean towards

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the Protestant side; and so everything converged in favour of Cecil's plan—the landed interest, the zeal of the Reformers, Elizabeth's own indifference to religion (though she disliked the spirit of the Reformation), and the support of Philip II of Spain (although he was the chief champion of Catholicism in Europe).

**The Change in Religion.** Before Mary's death a document had been secretly drawn up either by Cecil himself or under his direction called "A Device for the Alteration of Religion." The three points it contained were (1) the stopping of all preaching except by official order; (2) the turning out from the magistracy of those who sympathized with the old religion, especially the senior magistrates, and the putting in their place of younger men picked for their Protestant sympathies; and (3) the setting up of a committee which would be kept very secret and which should prepare a new Liturgy for England to take the place of the Mass.

When it came to the crowning of Elizabeth all the bishops refused, for already there were signs of a coming change in religion, notably when Cecil had deprived Mary's Chancellor, Heath, the Archbishop of York, and given the custody of the seals to a violent anti-Catholic, his wife's brother-in-law, Nicholas Bacon. However, one of the bishops gave way, the Bishop of Carlisle, and the others stood by while Elizabeth was anointed and crowned on Sunday, January 15, 1559. There was a solemn High Mass. Elizabeth took the oath to preserve the Catholic religion intact. She received the Catholic communion (under one kind). A Parliament was summoned, and Cecil saw to it that five new anti-Catholic peers should be added to it. It was sufficient to turn the scale. The Commons therein were, of course, the creatures of the Government, more than two-thirds of them being new members.

Elizabeth was recalcitrant, but the change in religion was made. She had told Philip's Ambassador that she was determined not to take her father's old title of Head of the Church, and in this, so far as the mere form of words was concerned, she was successful; but the most important point of all was gained against her when the new Prayer Book was found to be the readoption, with no great changes, of Edward VI's second Prayer Book, the one which was intensely Calvinist in spirit and designed to obliterate the Mass. Edward VI's *first*

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Prayer Book, which Elizabeth would have desired, was first supported by order, but mysteriously dropped.

The new Liturgy had great difficulty in passing. It would not have passed at all if the bishops had been present in the House of Lords in full strength, or if Cecil had not put in those five anti-Catholic peers. But of thirty spiritual peers three were forbidden to sit, and of the remaining twenty-seven seven of the sees were vacant; less than half the number—only twelve bishops—were in London, and of these two were in prison, and one was debarred from voting as being under promotion: only nine, therefore, out of thirty spiritual peers recorded their vote. The new Liturgy thus passed the House of Lords, which was the decisive thing, by a majority of three.

By May 8 the new Act of Supremacy, to which this new Liturgy was a schedule, was passed. The oath which it enjoined was refused by all the remaining bishops, and they were all deprived save one—Kitchin of Llandaff. Cecil's man Parker (he had been an old colleague of Cecil's at Cambridge, and, later, chaplain to Anne Boleyn), whom he had used to draw up the new Liturgy in secret, was made Archbishop of Canterbury; he was duly consecrated by four bishops, among whom two, Barlow, formerly Bishop of Bath, and Hodgkins, formerly Suffragan of Bedford, had originally been consecrated under the Catholic ordinal. This consecration of Parker was not under the Catholic ordinal, but under Cranmer's new form. Parker and Barlow added to their number, and then proceeded to consecrate the new Protestant bishops who were to succeed to the old Catholic ones. The new Church, therefore, which Cecil was setting up possessed continuity of orders if such continuity is dependent upon the ceremony of laying on of hands; if it is dependent upon the intention of making sacrificing priests—that is, of offering up the sacrifice of the Mass, as well as of laying on of hands—then there was no continuity of orders.

Upon this point the whole controversy turns as to the validity of Anglican orders, and it cannot be settled between the disputants, because they start from different premises. Those of the Roman Communion deny the validity of these orders, because there was certainly no intention of making sacrificing priests—on the contrary, the whole thing was designed to get

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rid of the Mass. But those who maintain the validity of these orders are content to rely upon the ceremony of the laying on of hands, and, if this be sufficient for continuity, continuity certainly was maintained.

Later on the Creed of the new Church was settled by the publication of its Thirty-nine Articles. These were in the main identical with the Forty-two Articles originally drawn up by Cranmer, but they were softened in some respects, and notably in the critical point of the nature of the Real Presence in the Sacrament, for it was of the very essence of Cecil's plan to provoke as little friction as possible at first. The Government winked at communion being frequently received in the Catholic form after the official communion had been taken in the Protestant form in the parish churches. It moved cautiously in the tendering of the Oath of Supremacy to the lower clergy, most of whom, in any case, would have conformed, but many of whom were left unquestioned, though, of course, all were bound to forgo the Mass and to use the new Liturgy. Another point, not of doctrine but of discipline—the marriage of the clergy—came as a matter of course, though the change was especially odious to Elizabeth. Meanwhile she had also been thwarted in her attempt to keep in touch with the Papacy by receiving the Papal Nuncio as she had desired and sending bishops to the Council of Trent. Cecil put his foot down, and both policies were reversed. He particularly emphasized the new state of affairs by saying that any one who suggested the reception of the Papal Nuncio was a traitor.

**The Reformation in Scotland.** Meanwhile a movement of the highest political importance for the future was taking place in Scotland.

The Catholic Church there was being undermined and imperilled in a different fashion from that which the merely political Reformation was using in England.

In Scotland the Reformation was supported by town mobs. Calvinism in its full, organized form had become an enthusiasm rapidly spreading throughout a large and increasing minority of the Lowlands, and especially the towns; the preacher who had the greatest influence in this matter was one John Knox, a cleric in Catholic orders (though not a priest) who had become violently attached abroad to the great French Reformers and who was founding, on their model, an especially logical and

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consistent counter-Church, to be known later as Presbyterian. In this movement there was nothing of an attempt at compromise, but a full and complete rejection of the Catholic doctrine of the Sacrament, an equally explicit statement on Predestination and the inefficacy of good works.

The movement now spreading to the masses of the Scottish people would not have done so, however, but for the support of the great Scottish nobles. They were already possessed of much of the old revenues of the Church, but they desired to possess it *all*. We must remember that the Church in Scotland was more corrupt than in England, and there had arisen against it an active hatred—not, as in England, in a small, but in a very large minority; and a rapidly increasing one, which soon became a majority of the nation. The little Queen of Scotland being away in France, engaged to the lad who was about to become King of that country, was acted for by her French mother, Mary of Guise, who was Regent; and the struggle lay between this woman's government (supported by her small garrison of trained soldiers, French and Scottish), and the Reforming party. These, during the first year of Elizabeth's reign, in 1559, had taken up arms and were actively attacking Catholicism right and left. They pulled down the cathedral of St Andrews; they burned monasteries and instruments of religion at large; and there marched with them (as there always does in such commotions) a great mass of people who cared nothing for the real object of the movement, but who rioted for booty. Nevertheless, the Scottish anti-Catholic frenzy was a true popular rising, growing rapidly into a national one. It became for a time master of Edinburgh. The Regent, Mary of Guise, who had fled, returned and reoccupied the capital: but precariously.

It was during all this turmoil that the King of France died and the little Queen of Scotland became Queen Consort of France, having been already married to the heir; she was not yet seventeen.

Cecil supported the religious revolution in Scotland consistently and in the teeth of Elizabeth, who detested Knox and was always adverse to supporting rebellion in Scotland, knowing how precarious was her own throne. But though in this, as in everything else, Cecil had his way and Elizabeth was compelled to yield, she was agreed with Cecil on one point which was the

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unbroken tradition of all English monarchs for centuries past—namely, the effort to exercise suzerainty, and (if possible at last) full sovereignty, over Scotland. It must be remembered that the French supported the claim of young Mary, who was, after all, in strict legitimacy the rightful Queen of England. The revolutionaries in Scotland were powerfully aided by the fact that Mary's French marriage might diminish the independence of Scotland: they were, without seeing it, preparing the subjection of Scotland to England.

Cecil went so far as to approve the use of English troops on the side of the Scottish rebels, but he provoked Elizabeth's anger so much that for once she freed herself from his control—and even sent him up north to make peace. And here again his good fortune served him well. The Regent of Scotland, Mary of Guise, died on June 11, 1560; her garrison in Leith (where it had been blockaded) capitulated to the great Scottish nobles who were supporting the rebellion and were now masters of the country, and Cecil was able to negotiate what is known as the Treaty of Edinburgh. Mary, the Queen of Scotland, and her husband Francis, the King of France, it was proposed, should acknowledge the right of Elizabeth to the Crown of England and should cease to quarter the English arms. Further, they should ratify concessions which had been made to the rebels, which concessions did not actually establish Presbyterianism, but partly gave to the rebels the government of the country. This Treaty of Edinburgh was drawn up on July 16, only five weeks after the Regent's death. Within a month the French soldiers had left Scotland and the English forces had also been withdrawn. The Estates of Scotland met; a great majority of the Assembly was on the side of the religious revolt. They abolished the religious jurisdiction of the Papacy, the Mass, and Catholic Baptism, under pain of banishment and death; and they approved the full Calvinistic faith in a document of Knox's drafting. The Scottish religious revolt seemed for the moment completely successful—everything had gone as Cecil desired it to go.

**Mary Queen of Scots returns to her Kingdom.** But before the end of the year the young King of France, Mary Queen of Scots' husband, had died. His brother succeeded, and his widow, *who had already refused to accept the Treaty of Edinburgh when it was submitted to her*, set out for Scotland.

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She was now eighteen years of age. The danger of Scotland and France being united under one crown had disappeared, but Mary was still the legitimate heiress to the throne of England, and against her Cecil would maintain an unceasing hostility. When she left for her own country in the August of 1561 Cecil attempted to intercept her upon the sea, off the East Coast, the English Government having already refused leave for the Queen to pass through English territory. The attempt to intercept the Queen of Scotland having failed, she landed at Leith on August 19, 1561, after a four-days voyage. But she had entered a den of wolves. The astonishing thing is, not that she failed single-handed to master such a pack, but that she held on as long as she did. Her courage was indomitable, but her judgment wayward, and her attitude in face of the very violent forces arrayed against her was one of bewilderment.

**The Darnley Marriage.** The Queen of Scots from various candidates for her hand chose her first cousin Darnley. He was tall and good-looking, weak and corrupt in character, and though little more than a boy (he was three years younger than Mary, not yet twenty) was already thoroughly corrupt. He represented, as she did, the Catholic tradition. He was descended, as she was, from the sister of Henry VIII, and therefore also, like her, had a claim (though a weaker one) to the English crown. Why Elizabeth allowed the marriage, seeing that Darnley had been brought up at her court, may be debated; it may be because it put an end to any question there might have been of Mary's marrying Elizabeth's own favourite, Dudley, to whom she had already become attached. And why Cecil permitted the match is still more difficult to understand—the Darnley marriage strengthened Mary's claim to the English throne and would apparently strengthen the Catholic position in Scotland. It has been imagined that Cecil acted with the farsighted view that Darnley's vile character would soon lead to further trouble north of the border; but this is unlikely, and it is more probable that he had not the power to prevent Darnley's going to Scotland to marry the Queen. Elizabeth wrote a letter of protest to Mary against the match too late, in May 1565; in the early July of that same year Mary married Darnley secretly, and on the 29th of the month went through the public ceremony with him.

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The marriage went to pieces at once. Seven months after it, Mary being already with child, her secretary, Rizzio, upon whom she had come to depend for help in government, was murdered before her eyes (on March 9, 1566). The quarrel between Mary and Darnley, which the Queen now had patched up as best she could, had led to yet another confused rebellion, which was suppressed, when on June 19, 1566, Mary gave birth in the castle of Edinburgh to a son who was later to be James I of England.

The rebellion broke out again, a confused welter of interests, every conspirator playing in reality for his own hand. Early in the next year, 1567, the most treacherous of them all, Maitland, the Secretary (one of the great nobles in the Protestant interest), Bothwell, and Morton, who had been the leader in the murder of Rizzio, conspired to murder Darnley in his turn. It is possible that their design was known to Mary, but this has never been proved. On February 9, 1567, Darnley was recovering from an illness in a smaller house near Holyrood Palace, outside Edinburgh; Mary had visited him, returned to a dance in the Palace of Holyrood and slept there that night. In the small hours of the next day, Monday, February 10, the house where Darnley lay was blown up, and his body was found at some distance from it, dead, but unhurt by the explosion. Hatred for the Catholic Queen was growing fierce among the Calvinist masses of the capital; placards appeared accusing Bothwell of the murder, with Mary as his accomplice. Elizabeth, who desired to help Mary, sent her a letter emphasizing the importance of trying and convicting the murderers. This letter was given to Maitland, the Secretary, to deliver to the Queen of Scots, and he treacherously suppressed it. On April 12 he and Morton with a large armed force presented themselves at Bothwell's trial, and saw to it that there should be a verdict of acquittal by default, and the scandal of the acquittal was, quite falsely, laid to Mary's door.

The object of the conspirators was now plain; Darnley had opposed the alienation of the Crown lands which the rebel nobles had seized, and proposed to restore those lands to the Crown. Now that they were in power they hurriedly summoned a Parliament which confirmed them in the possession of their plunder. As Mary was riding back to Edinburgh a week later from Stirling, where she had put her child for safety, Bothwell

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met her with a large armed force, seized her, carried her away, and married her. She married him with Protestant rites, and while it was claimed that she was a reluctant victim, it was remarked also that she raised Bothwell to a dukedom within a month of her abduction, and had married him three days afterwards. On the other hand, he still kept her a prisoner.

**Mary's Defeat and Flight to England.** Bothwell's fellow-conspirators and fellow-murderers now turned against him. They appeared with an army outside Edinburgh on June 15, 1567, exactly a month after his marriage with Mary, and Morton told the Queen that if she would follow them they would restore her to full authority; they let Bothwell go off unhurt. Mary allowed herself to be taken to Edinburgh, where a raging mob howled for her blood. She was next imprisoned by the rebels in Lochleven Castle, on an island which belonged to Morton's half-brother; her gaoler was her father's old paramour, the mother of the illegitimate Moray, a leader of the anti-Catholic movement, and one whom the rebels desired to make Regent to confirm them in their spoils. Mary was threatened with death unless she resigned her crown to the baby James and appointed Moray as Regent—a post which he took in the August of that year, 1567. Elizabeth all this while had insisted upon Mary's liberation, and personally assured her of protection and active help, but her envoy, Throckmorton, knowing where the real power lay, preferred to obey Cecil, who was plotting for Mary's destruction.

The Queen of Scots escaped in the spring of the next year, 1568; the Regent Moray brought a disciplined force against her, dispersed her supporters in the scrimmage of Langside, near Glasgow, and the Queen fled, in a famous ride for the border covering sixty miles in a day. On Sunday, May 16, she crossed the Solway in a fishing-boat, landing at Workington, in Cumberland, and threw herself under the protection of Elizabeth, who had so strongly promised her support.

But Elizabeth was not competent to act, and from that day onward (May 16, 1568) Mary Queen of Scots was the prisoner of Cecil—who would in due time see to her being put to death. So long as she lived his whole system lay in peril. She represented the old Catholic cause which was most living and vigorous in England; she was the legitimate Queen of England whom a great number would acclaim should there be

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a Catholic rising. Above all, in case of Elizabeth's death, Mary must necessarily be her successor—and Elizabeth's health was always bad. Further, Cecil was beginning to understand by this time that Elizabeth was incapable of having children.

**The First Step in Cecil's Arrangements for the Ruin of Mary Queen of Scots.** The first step in Cecil's arrangements for ruining and ultimately destroying Mary Queen of Scots was to prevent her meeting her cousin Elizabeth, who had promised her protection. This was best done by saying that she could not be given an audience until she was cleared of complicity in Darnley's murder. But as she would certainly indignantly refuse to be tried, she being a crowned head, on any accusation, especially by foreigners, Cecil astutely suggested that not she but her accusers should be examined. Mary committed the false step of allowing this plea, and saying that the English Government was welcome to examine, and 'try,' as it were, her enemies. A conference was summoned at York, where the chief of Mary's enemies were to appear, Moray, Morton, and Maitland. They brought with them what have since become famous as the "Casket Letters." These were documents purporting to be the copies of love sonnets written by Mary to Bothwell, and the draft of a first marriage contract agreed to between them. The latter has been proved a forgery; and the argument against the former is that only copies were produced. Mary wholly denied the authorship; she demanded the originals, and also to be brought face to face with her accusers. Cecil took care that neither demand should be granted. One of the English Commissioners sent to confer at York was the fourth Duke of Norfolk, Elizabeth's first cousin once removed, for Anne Boleyn had been his great-aunt. He was thirty-two years of age, had been brought up by Foxe, the author of the *Book of Martyrs*, and was a strong anti-Catholic. He was a guileless, open sort of young man, easily duped, and the Scottish traitor Maitland, the Secretary, used him as follows.

Maitland told him that the Regent Moray would favour his marriage with Mary Queen of Scots. He told Mary that the marriage was the only thing that could save her, and said that he had only come to York in order to do her that service; and he told Mary's friends that if she married Norfolk Elizabeth would put her back on the throne of Scotland. All these three

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lies would tend to Mary's ruin; her marriage with Norfolk would have meant the end of Moray's power, and, so far from saving her, the project was sure to alarm Elizabeth. Mary's accusers, with Moray now at their head, were asked to come to London in order to inform the English Queen more fully, and Cecil himself and his brother-in-law Bacon joined in the inquiry. Documents purporting to be the originals of the Casket Letters were shown to the Commissioners and a small group of nobles, but in private and without Mary's having any access to them or power of examination. So the year 1568 ended, and as Mary insisted on seeing Elizabeth Cecil hurriedly closed the conference and sent Moray back to Scotland. As for Mary, she was kept a closer prisoner than ever.

**Cecil determines to provoke Spain.** But Mary's ruin was only part of Cecil's policy; he was already embarked on a new departure which was to have very great consequences; he was planning to kick down the support on which he had based all the earlier policy of his reign. For that policy had been based upon the friendship of Philip II, who would, if he could, have married his sister-in-law Elizabeth himself, and who had put her upon the throne and kept her there, and tried to get the Papacy itself to accept Cecil's newly established English Liturgy.

So long as there was grave danger from France and so long as the foundations of the new *régime* were being laid the friendship of Spain was invaluable, but in France, since the death of Henri II in 1559, the Reformers had become formidable and had already attempted civil war. The French crown passed into the hands of Henri II's successive sons, lads incompetent to govern; the great families were, as elsewhere, tending to use the new Protestant enthusiasm in order to weaken the Throne; the Queen-Mother Catherine de Médicis was engaged in a perpetual struggle against the nobles and their Protestant backing. France was thus so divided as to grow powerless, and Cecil could therefore safely begin to provoke Spain to a rupture; it would be running a risk, *but if he succeeded he and the new state of affairs he had established would be independent and secure, with no need of support from overseas.* The King of Spain himself was already in difficulties through the revolt of the Netherlands; his great empire sprawled across the map of Europe; the Netherlands were the remotest province

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of it and could only be reached by his soldiers after a long march from the south down the valley of the Rhine. The Netherlands were very rich, and provided a major part of Philip's revenue. Their great towns, Brussels and Ghent, and Antwerp, Lille, and the rest, had enjoyed for centuries large powers of self-government, and now the legitimate king of those great cities was remote and had an alien quality about him, and his financial demands irked them; further, the Reformation had taken a strong hold here, as elsewhere, and it included here, as elsewhere, some of the wealthiest families.

Apart from the irritation against taxes, there had been risings against the Spanish system of government, including the strict inquiry into, and punishment of, the Calvinist malcontents. In these risings there had been, as in Scotland, great violence done; buildings destroyed, churches looted, and monks tortured. Philip had sent to the Netherlands an armed force, comparatively small but well disciplined, under the Duke of Alva, and the Spanish soldiers were then by far the best infantry in Europe—one may even say the only fully trained infantry. Alva suppressed the risings and punished them with great severity; but the process was costly. The Spanish soldiers were highly paid, and here came Cecil's opportunity to provoke a breach with Spain. Certain ships bearing money for the payment of Alva's troops took refuge from the pirates with whom the Channel was then infested and ran into English ports, including Plymouth. The Spanish Ambassador asked Elizabeth for a safe-conduct, so that the money could come by land to the Straits of Dover and thence be convoyed over to the Netherlands, and Elizabeth granted this request without hesitation and as a matter of course, because it came from a friendly monarch with whom she was in alliance—but Cecil forbade her policy. He pretended to have doubts as to who were the real owners of the money on board, and without actually confiscating that money he detained it, thus half paralysing Alva's action in the Netherlands and greatly helping the rebellion against the King of Spain there. For Alva had to raise money by still more drastic taxation in the absence of his supplies, and the financial revolt was increased.

**The Pirates.** Cecil had another instrument to use for provoking Spain. The great American empire of Spain lay open to the attack of buccaneers: the Spanish Government

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claimed (as did all Governments) a monopoly of trade between their own ports, and they also forbade the importation of Negro slaves from Africa. But in the hot climates of the new Spanish possessions, and under the laws forbidding the colonists to enslave the natives there, the temptation to smuggle in slaves from abroad was very great. There were therefore very large profits to be made by any free-lance who should smuggle goods into Spanish harbours against the existing international laws and sell cargoes of slaves to the colonists. Inevitably those who went in for this smuggling and slave-trading, bringing cargoes of unfortunate blacks whom they had seized in Africa and selling them on the other side of the Atlantic, would further indulge in piracy, killing and looting when the opportunity occurred. Obviously no regular Government would openly support practices of this kind, and the pirates, smugglers, and slave-traders of all nations were regarded as outlaws; they were drawn from the rebels against constituted authority—Huguenot adventurers from the French ports and rebel Dutch adventurers. To these after some time were added certain English adventurers of the same sort, but there was this difference between them—that the English adventurers were not drawn from any body of the population openly in rebellion against their own Government.

A certain John Hawkins, a brave and able seaman of the West Country, slaver and smuggler with armed ships, was bold enough to occupy during the year 1567 the port of St John of Ulloa, which stood upon an island commanding the chief point from which treasure was exported from the New World to Spain. He was, of course, summoned to clear out, and afterwards was effectively turned out by force. According to his account, the thing was only done by the use of a ruse, but anyhow he lost ships. John Hawkins, who linked up legitimate trade with his more criminal business, protested to Cecil—who had long seen the opportunity these buccaneers were to afford him. Cecil was secretly protecting them, while openly apologizing to Spain. Elizabeth's Ambassador in Spain was told to apologize for these piracies committed by Hawkins, and there was a promise of compensation, but Cecil was determined to continue to provoke Philip, in order, not at once but ultimately, to render himself independent of Spanish support. His spy system served him well. Hawkins, who cared nothing

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for nationality or religion, was offering to sell his services to the King of Spain and to bring a lot of English ships with him, to help restore Catholicism in England. Cecil's spy system found this out, and thenceforward Hawkins was in the hollow of his hand. Cecil could have him hanged at any moment, and henceforward he used Hawkins as a counter-agent to lead the King of Spain on.

**The Crisis in Cecil's Career.** So things stood at the opening of the year 1569, when the crisis of Cecil's career began. For ten years he had been working at gradually establishing a new state of affairs in England, with a new Liturgy, and so confirming the new millionaires (of whom he was the chief man) in their possessions. He had broken England away from Christendom, he had got the Queen of Scots in his power, and, unpopular as had been all his actions, he had provoked no rebellion against his government. But things were coming to a head. Spain was exasperated; the long-drawn and inexcusable imprisonment of the Queen of Scotland was becoming intolerable; the principal English merchants in London were becoming doubly angered by the Spanish embargo on their commerce which Cecil's action had provoked; and the recognition by the Papacy and the Catholic world as a whole of Cecil's *régime* as a principal enemy was now clear.

At this point the foreign princes, the Pope, and the more intense Catholic leaders in England fell into a first-class blunder. They made the error of aiming at Elizabeth, because she was overtly the head of the Government. Had they distinguished between her cause and Cecil's and supported her against Cecil, they would have had great chance of success: for, after all, she was Queen. But they attacked *her*, and plotted against her. Cecil took full advantage of this state of affairs and played on Elizabeth's fears for her personal safety. By such a policy he increased his power; but it was still vulnerable, for on top of all this now came a proposal for Norfolk's marriage with Mary. This marriage had it come off, would have destroyed Cecil for good.

In the middle of the year 1569, in June, four of the most influential men of England—Leicester (Dudley) himself, Pembroke, Arundel (the head of the FitzAlans), and Norfolk (Arundel's son-in-law)—wrote to Mary proposing to put her back upon the throne of Scotland, where she should make a

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perpetual alliance with Elizabeth and renounce her claim to the English throne in case Elizabeth had heirs; but if the English Queen had no heirs she should admit Mary's claim to the succession—and all this was connected with the proposal for Norfolk's marrying Mary. Elizabeth was to be told the whole plan *except* the proposed marriage with Norfolk, which it was known she disapproved of. But Leicester told her it had been suggested, and Norfolk was summoned to court in the autumn of that same year, 1569.

Had he refused to come, and joined the great men of the North who were prepared to rise against Cecil's power—the Nevilles, the Percies, and the rest—Cecil would have fallen. Alva might have landed from across the North Sea, and, if the Pope had acted early enough and had aimed at the right target, Cecil, all England would have been changed. But the whole thing was bungled. Norfolk surrendered himself by coming up to court in early October, when he was put into the Tower; Alva advised that it would be dangerous at that moment to help Catholicism in England because the French would attack in the Netherlands; for he did not appreciate how weak the French had become through their violent civil dissensions. Northumberland (Percy) did not write to the Pope until a month after Norfolk had been imprisoned, and the Pope did not get this appeal until a month after that. The rising in the North therefore wholly failed. The rebels had no united command, their forces melted away, and by the beginning of the next year, 1570, the Government (which meant Cecil) took the most fearful reprisals. Three hundred were put to death in Durham alone, every village which had sent even one man to the rising was visited with executions, land was confiscated on all sides, and the property and life of every one were at the mercy of martial law. Things could not have fallen out better for Cecil; and to crown his triumph the Pope—long after all was over—issued a Bull of Excommunication against Elizabeth! He issued it when it could only exasperate and be of no political service. Philip of Spain and the King of France refused to allow the Bull to be published in their dominions; a lawyer called Felton had the courage to fix a copy of it to the door of the Bishop of London's palace—but it was an empty gesture. The whole mismanaged effort had failed, and whereas a wedge should have been driven between Elizabeth and the

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power of Cecil, the latter had been confirmed in his mastery over the Queen and the kingdom.

**The Killing of Norfolk.** Norfolk was kept back to be further dealt with when the time should be ripe; he was the head of the old nobility, and to get him killed would be the completion of Cecil's success. He *was* killed through the use of what is known as the Ridolfi Plot. Ridolfi was a rich Italian banker in the city of London; both Mary Stuart and Norfolk thought (most erroneously) that they could still get rid of Cecil, and Ridolfi planned a scheme for rescuing Mary Stuart. Norfolk was privy to this scheme. When Ridolfi got to the Continent in the spring of 1571 he had made his plan, including an attack on Elizabeth herself—a repetition of the old error—and it is certain that the removal of Elizabeth by violence, and perhaps her death, was considered at the Spanish court. Ridolfi had the folly to write to the Duke of Norfolk from abroad, and the letter fell at once into the hands of Cecil's spies, by whom it was deciphered. A sum of money which Norfolk was sending to Mary was intercepted, as also were sundry letters from Norfolk to the Pope, from Mary to Norfolk, and from Mary to her agent abroad supporting Ridolfi. But it must be remembered in all this that there is no proof whatever of Mary and Norfolk having knowledge of Ridolfi's extravagant, wild talk later against Elizabeth herself—they had only concerned themselves with the release of Mary. And Norfolk, an ingenuous man, denied with vehemence to the end all accusations of treason. All he had done, he said, was to propose the release of Mary, who was unjustly held a prisoner, the putting of her back on her own throne of Scotland, and her proclamation as the successor to Elizabeth in case there should be no direct heir. Nevertheless Norfolk was condemned, and on Saturday, February 11, 1572, Elizabeth signed the warrant for his execution. It is obvious that she had been overborne, and as obvious is Cecil's mastery over her in all this. She struggled against the shedding of her cousin's blood, and revoked the warrant. At the end of April she signed it again, and again refused to use it. But Cecil was tenacious; his House of Commons petitioned not only against Norfolk's life, but against Mary's, and the object of Cecil's move in this was to use the lesser outrage as an introduction for the greater one later on. It would have been madness for him to provoke all

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Europe and a Catholic rising at home by putting Mary to death at so early a date; but Norfolk's death was just possible.

The unfortunate Elizabeth gave way at last; she signed the warrant for the third time at the end of May, and on Monday, June 2, 1572, Norfolk was put to death, loudly affirming on the scaffold his attachment to the Reformed religion and his innocence. William Cecil, who was now in the House of Lords under the title of Burghley, had fully triumphed.

**Cecil's New Position.** The year 1572 marks a new era in Cecil's control of England and a maturing of his plans. He was now wealthier than ever, enjoying the prestige of his years and of long-continued power; he had just won his complete triumph, marked by the execution of Norfolk, over the old nobility; he had permanently established in Elizabeth's mind the dread of assassination; for up to then Elizabeth had been able to show, sometimes, a certain amount of resistance, but after 1572 she could always be brought to heel, if by no other means, by some new fear of death.

In that same year, 1572, the danger to Cecil from French action, already greatly weakened by the religious wars in France, became almost negligible through the second <sup>1</sup> Massacre of St Bartholomew. That massacre was copied in other cities, and henceforward the religious civil war in France would grow so fierce as to completely paralyse that power. Again, in this same year of 1572, the Dutch rebels captured their first seaport, Brielle, and this gave them an increased power to hurt Spain, whose control of the Netherlands they were gradually undermining.

## THE MAIN ACTION AGAINST CATHOLICISM DEVELOPS

**Change in the English Government's Attitude towards Catholicism.** It was at the same time that Cecil's crushing out of Catholicism in England was able to take on a new and much more drastic form. The rising in the North and the Bull of Excommunication were the pretexts for the new step. Hitherto Cecil's policy had been one of *gradually* increasing

<sup>1</sup> The first Massacre of St Bartholomew had taken place three years before on the same day of the month—August 24, 1569. The deed was remembered and may have suggested the second affair. It consisted of the massacre of Catholic prisoners who had been promised their lives after the surrender of Orthez.

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severity; he had begun by winking at something like the toleration of private Catholic opinion and even the reception of Communion in the Catholic form, but he had made things more and more difficult, until in 1571 he produced laws of active persecution: it was treason (that is, death in the most horrible form and confiscation of all property) to hear even a secret Mass, and the penalties of *Præmunire* (that is, outlawry and ruin) were to fall on those who so much as possessed articles of Catholic worship.

The time was ripe for this drastic change, not only because excuses were present, but because every year that would pass would strengthen Cecil's position and weaken that of Catholicism in England by a new generation's growing up ignorant of Catholic practice.

Hitherto every one over thirty had grown to maturity in a fully Catholic England, but by 1571 the young men and women had attended none but Protestant services; twelve to fifteen years later, by the time Cecil had trained his son to continue his dynasty and had completed his own career, only old and middle-aged men remembered hearing Mass in English parish churches, and though a strong affection for the old national religion survived, and affected half the nation at least till the end of that generation, familiarity with it had faded.

This is also the date, 1572, on which there is the first definite attempt on the part of Cecil to kill Mary Stuart, in spite of Elizabeth. In that year he privately proposed to hand her over the border to Mar, the then Regent of Scotland (Moray having been assassinated), and the understanding with Cecil was that after Mar had got the Queen of Scots into his power he was to kill her as soon as might be. The plan fell through because Mar himself died that same autumn; but the killing of Mary was now a permanent project in Cecil's mind. Here is also the date, 1572, on which we get the first beginnings of the long-drawn-out negotiations for a marriage between Elizabeth and a French prince. Not that Cecil had any intention of allowing such a marriage—for, though there could be no children, it would have brought in an influence rival to his own—but that allowing Elizabeth to play with the idea would suit his every purpose. It would allow him to keep a sort of balance or see-saw between France and Spain.

**The Flirtation with Anjou.** This long flirtation with the

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King of France's brother, called first Duke of Alençon and later Duke of Anjou, though it is but a minor incident and was not intended to come to anything by Cecil, merits attention because it is characteristic of the way in which the unfortunate Elizabeth was treated.

When it began she was already forty; she had been completely bald for ten years, and had to wear a red wig. Her skin was like parchment, her health was deplorable; but she remained a woman of great energy and very high intelligence. She had enjoyed futile but very close intimacy with all sorts of men, first among whom was Leicester (Dudley), her constant companion. The group included also a dancing fellow called Hatton who had caught her eye; he used to write her the most extravagant letters, and made a fortune out of the connection—largely drawn from the endowments of the Church.<sup>1</sup> But her feeling for Anjou was serious. Elizabeth's condition was such that even if there had been a match there could have been no children, but for the only time in her life she fell genuinely in love. Anjou was twenty years younger than herself, and her public and private endearments with him were scandalous. She was openly affianced to him as well, and only quite late in the affair, when she was nearing fifty, was she given to understand that nothing would be allowed to come of it. She suffered a permanent regret for Anjou. He died after the business had dragged on twelve years, during which she had seen him but rarely; but she felt it so strongly that she refused to revisit Whitehall, where they had been together. This pathetic but rather absurd business had the further advantage for Cecil that the Dutch rebels against Philip of Spain were looking to Anjou for help, and by keeping the business going Cecil could always use it as a threat against Spain to prevent that Power from attacking him.

With the year 1577 we get the next date when several further steps in the development of Cecil's projects all begin together, while at the same time a serious menace to those projects arises. It was in the year 1577 that Cecil began to use Drake as a powerful instrument for feeling his way towards

<sup>1</sup> The property of the bishopric of Ely was despoiled in Hatton's favour, and it was but one example of what was going on all around. One bishopric was kept vacant during the whole of the reign, and all the others, together with minor endowments, were despoiled in the course of it.

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a breach with Spain, without provoking war too early; he worked always, hard and successfully, against men, less astute, who desired to bring things to an issue prematurely.

**The Use of Francis Drake.** We have seen how Cecil had already used Hawkins; after catching him in secret correspondence with the King of Spain he had made him a counter-agent against that monarch. Cecil had further hoodwinked Philip by drawing up a solemn agreement with him called the Convention of Bristol. By this convention the money seized on the Spanish ships five years before was released, commercial intercourse between the two nations was restored (to the great joy of the London merchants, whose dislike of the tension Cecil dreaded), and a firm promise of permanent friendship was extended to Philip. Under cover of the friendly sentiment thus aroused in Spain the use of Drake began.

Francis Drake was the first seaman of his time, a man of the highest courage, which was only equalled by his power of command, his unscrupulous avarice, readiness to rob and murder, vanity, and tenacity of purpose. He had served his apprenticeship of slave-trading, piracy, and buccaneering under Hawkins; he was now starting off on an expedition across the Atlantic. It was given out to be peaceful and intended for the purpose of exploration and commerce, but in reality Drake was going, under the protection of Cecil, to attack the subjects of the King of Spain, with whom England was at peace, to commit acts of piracy against the treasures of the New World, and to do all in his power to exasperate Philip. Cecil could, of course, have repudiated Drake whenever he chose, and have hanged him also for a pirate, but he did protect him so effectively that when Drake put his lieutenant, Doughty, to death during the voyage the English Government refused the relatives of the murdered man the opportunity of an investigation. Drake rounded the Horn, fell upon the unsuspecting cities of the Pacific coast, looted, massacred, and sacked before resistance could be organized, fled westward across the Pacific, accomplished prodigies of seamanship, and ultimately returned to England at the end of three years, having circumnavigated the globe for the first time since the Portuguese captains of Magellan had done so nearly sixty years before. The understanding was that all the loot which Drake seized during these piracies should be paid over to his employers, the English

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courtiers and the court itself. But he was to have a small commission of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and the booty was so enormous that this provided him with a comfortable country gentleman's income of what we should call to-day some six or seven thousand a year, on which he settled down for the rest of his life.

**The Missionary Priests.** In the same year, 1577, began the duel between Cecil's Government and the missionary priests who from this moment appeared in England with the object of sacrificing themselves in the effort to keep the Catholic religion alive, in spite of the persecution. They were Englishmen, devoted to their cause, and their heroism was a serious menace to Cecil's plan for the destruction of Catholic traditions in England. Such was their tenacity in the face of a universal and highly organized secret service, and in spite of tortures and a horrible death, that they might have succeeded but for a prime blunder in the direction of their efforts. It was ordered that they should not support the cause of Mary and should always profess their loyalty to Elizabeth. This compromise, which was thought politic, divided the Catholic effort and rendered it abortive.

The first of these men to appear and to be promptly put to death was a young priest called Mayne. Richard Grenville, who was anxious to possess the lands of one Tregian, in Cornwall, where Mayne had been received, threatened the jury (who were for acquitting Mayne) and secured his hanging, drawing, and quartering, with all the horrors accompanying that form of death. Tregian's lands were handed over to one of the Queen's relatives (her first cousin, Anne Boleyn's nephew), and during all the subsequent persecution, which grew in intensity as the years proceeded, a correspondingly intense confiscation of lands continued. These confiscations of Catholic estates rapidly destroyed the economic basis of Catholicism, and promoted the growth of that vested interest against it which had begun with the confiscation of the monasteries half a century before.

The greatest name in connection with the missionary priests is that of Campion. He was a man of learning and great public reputation, a Londoner, and he had become a Jesuit; for the Jesuits, with their military organization and discipline, were the backbone of the heroic effort from thence onward. Campion was put to death on December 1, 1581; and it is characteristic

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of Cecil's spy system, organized under Walsingham, that Campion was betrayed by the man who had served his last Mass.

**The Support of the Dutch Rebels.** In 1579 the prolonged and increasingly successful rebellion of the Netherlands against Philip of Spain, a rebellion which was progressively weakening his power throughout Europe, reached a landmark in the Union of Utrecht. This was a combination between the seven northern provinces of the Netherlands, in which a powerful group of Calvinist merchants had gained the upper hand, declaring their independence of their legitimate sovereign Philip, and their proposal to constitute themselves into a separate state. It is a date of capital importance to the history of Europe, for the claim was successfully maintained in arms, and by the continued oppression of the large Catholic minority in the new republic it was a victory for Calvinism and a heavy loss to the Spanish prestige and power in Europe.

The remaining nine provinces of the Netherlands, disgusted with the anti-Catholicism of the new state, were henceforward more and more easily persuaded to return to the Spanish allegiance, though they had been as wholehearted in the earlier *financial* rebellion as any. The prime mover in the Union of Utrecht was the wealthiest of all the wealthy men combined against Spain—William, Prince of Orange, the ancestor of the present reigning house of Holland. So far as England was concerned, the interest of the occasion was that within a few years it led to a situation in which Cecil could openly support the Calvinist rebels of Holland against Spain. William of Orange was put to the Ban of the Empire by Philip, and was shot five years later by a private individual who took upon himself the carrying out of the sentence, braving the terrible death by torture which was bound to follow at the hands of the rebels.

**Further Steps in the Provocation of Spain.** Drake had returned from his voyage in the year 1580, coming with his ship *The Golden Hind* into Plymouth Sound on September 26 of that year. Six months later it was judged that the time had come to make a further demonstration against Spain, relying upon the continued negotiations with the French.

The Dutch rebels had invited Anjou to be their sovereign; he had not been able to maintain himself, but his continued connection with Elizabeth, and therefore with the English

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Government, permitted what followed. On April 4, 1581, Drake, whose name now stood for the greatest of the piratical attacks against Spain and Spanish commerce in the New World, was knighted, and it was Anjou's agent in England, Marchemont, who gave him the accolade, Elizabeth handing him the sword. Even so peace was maintained between Spain and England, though the insult had been public and very grave; but after the assassination of William of Orange in 1584 Cecil thought the time was ripe to make the quarrel irremediable. With a show of reluctance he now supported the Dutch rebels, and Leicester was sent over with an English force which contained many Irish soldiers.

Leicester failed, as might have been expected, for he had no military talents and he offended his allies by his arrogance. The expedition is only memorable for the death of Sir Philip Sidney, the poet, Walsingham's son-in-law, and, oddly enough, the godson of Philip of Spain, from whom he had received his name. One of his last acts was to implore his father-in-law, who was already weary of paying his debts, to give him the confiscated lands of a Catholic conspirator. Of more significance, however, than the death of this excellent poet (Leicester's nephew) was the action of two of the English commanders, Stanley and York, which throws a vivid light on the nature of the time. Their conscience would not tolerate the support of rebels against a lawful sovereign (a sentiment in which Elizabeth concurred, for rebellion against a crowned head was odious to her), and the Calvinist against the Catholic cause. One of them—York—handed over Zutphen to the forces of its rightful sovereign. It was in front of this town that Sidney was killed. The incident clearly shows the difficulty, even at this late date, of Cecil's cause, and the remaining strong tradition of Catholicism in England.

**The Killing of Mary Stuart.** Meanwhile the most momentous of all Cecil's later resolutions had been taken: the efforts at getting Mary Queen of Scots assassinated by the rebels of her own country having failed, it was determined to put her to death upon some charge which could be publicly defended.

But this was not easy to find. Mary was a sovereign, a crowned head, and by all the most profound feelings of the time, which had the strength of a religion, was immune from trial by subjects, and the more immune from trial by the subjects of a foreign Power. After solemn promises of succour and support

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she had been kept a prisoner in defiance of all law and of the opinion of Christendom; her imprisonment had increased in rigour and was a scandal of the first magnitude; none could blame her efforts at escape. How, then, could a plea be put forward which would give even colourable excuse for getting her out of the way? We have seen how the easiest method—private assassination—had failed. It is not, of course, possible to fix the date when the idea of this final policy clarified in Cecil's mind, but we know that the plots which his agents wove against the Queen of Scots date from as early as 1583.

A consideration which was most powerful in the whole affair was the state of Elizabeth's health. By 1584 this was so alarming that her death was already expected, she herself announced it as being, in her expectation, imminent; but by that time the intrigue against Mary was far advanced. Moreover, Elizabeth had made a last effort to act independently and to let Mary go free; she had considered this policy even after the assassination of William of Orange had renewed all her own vivid fears of a similar fate.

Two preliminary steps were taken for the killing of Mary Stuart. First, the usual underground efforts of Cecil and the head of his secret spy system, Walsingham, were set at work; secondly, what was called "the Association" was formed. The credit for planning the Association was ascribed publicly to Leicester, but it is not credible that this vain and silly man, who, moreover, was always playing fast and loose, should have been the real author. It bears the very stamp of Cecil's genius—for it was a most able move. The idea was to form into an association men who would pledge themselves, when they subscribed to it, to kill not only anyone who plotted against Elizabeth, *but also anyone in whose favour such plots should be directed*: in other words, Cecil's prisoner, Mary Queen of Scots. By mixing up the two points, the first of which would certainly have large support, the second of which was morally indefensible (for it presumed the killing of an innocent party), it was easy to obtain a considerable following. But there was much more in the Association than this: it was an instrument whereby it became possible to get the names of those who were openly and steadfastly opposed to Cecil and all his *régime*. Men, being asked to subscribe to the Association, feared to refuse, lest they should mark themselves out as enemies of the Government. Those who

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refused would be known as suspects. In general, the Association provided a widespread popular foundation for the policy of killing Mary Queen of Scots, which was now actively in hand.

As for the secret efforts of the Government which were to procure her death, their action was as follows.

A young man called Gilbert Giffard, most useful to Cecil and Walsingham because his family were notoriously strong Catholics, consented, being penniless, to turn against his religion and become a spy of Walsingham's. He was sent to worm himself into the English Catholic college at Rome, where he was apparently suspect, and he also wormed himself into the English Catholic college in France, of which Allen—later Cardinal—was the head. Allen in turn suspected him, and he went back to Rome in 1583. So far we can only trace Giffard's activities through the sums of money which he had to spend, but after 1583 we find him fully in service as a spy and secret agent of Walsingham's. He went to Paris under the character of a Catholic devoted to Mary's cause, and saw Morgan, who was Mary's secretary in that capital. Morgan gave him a letter for the Queen of Scots, and he came back to England at the very end of 1585. He was taken on landing immediately to Walsingham, who lodged him with another agent, Philips, a man of great ability at deciphering cyphers and at forging, and, further, a good linguist, speaking and writing French, Italian, Latin, and Spanish. Philips also called himself a Catholic in public, and was well paid. Another agent of Walsingham's secret service, also well paid, was one Poley, of whom later.

There was at this time a wealthy young man of twenty-five called Babington, possessed of landed property, who had come across Mary herself years before when he was a page in the house of Lord Shrewsbury, the Queen of Scots' keeper. He was just the man for Cecil's purpose, enthusiastic, ignorant of the world, and, however much he might be led on, quite incompetent to carry out any plot into which he was duped. He was marked down.

It was next necessary to get some document which could be made out to be an act of Mary's compassing Elizabeth's death. All her correspondence was intercepted, the letters written by Morgan in Paris and handed by that unsuspecting person to the spy were thoroughly gone through before Mary received them, and her answers were equally gone through and copies made before they were sent on. This system began in the middle of

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January 1586, just after Mary had been moved to a house called Chartley, in Derbyshire, under the close custody of Amyas Paulet.<sup>1</sup> But the letters sent by Morgan and the letters sent in answer to them contained nothing incriminating Mary, and at the end of April 1586 Giffard was sent to France again to hurry things up; once more—as a Catholic—he got among those who were scheming against the Queen of England, and he saw to it that one of them, Ballard, should go over to England towards the end of May. Giffard went after him at a discreet distance, and was at Chartley again on June 1. It was through Ballard, inspired by Giffard, that the thing was worked.

Ballard approached Babington, who was in London, and suggested the assassination of Elizabeth. Babington naturally hesitated, so Giffard appeared, still in his character of a Catholic conspirator, and egged him on. But still Babington, the dupe, hung back, though Giffard had got hold of men more violent than Ballard to press the project.

Here the secret agent, Poley, comes in, a man who bore, like the other spies, a reputation for intense devotion to the old religious tradition and Mary's cause. He in turn wormed himself into Babington's acquaintance and became a firm friend. Poley it was who finally pushed Babington over the edge and worked up his courage to the point of writing the letter upon which all was to turn. Babington wrote this letter to Mary Queen of Scots on or about July 6, 1586. It was intercepted, of course, passed through the hands of the spy, forger, and decipherer Philips; then it was allowed to reach Mary, and Mary replied to it. Let it be noted that the original has disappeared. All we have is a copy, and the authenticity of its phrases is worth no more than Philips' and Walsingham's word. Mary received this letter on July 10. It offered her liberation, and Babington had included in it—if we are to trust his own confession when later threatened with torture, in terror of death, and with the chance of preserving his life—a passage in which he spoke of six gentlemen, his friends, who were ready to put Elizabeth away. But in judging whether even this is true we must remember the character of the man Philips, for upon his copy alone our evidence depends. Mary's reply was also copied by Philips,

<sup>1</sup> The Paulet family were one of the first beneficiaries under the loot of religious endowment, and had been very active, especially in the West Country. This member of it was a particularly violent anti-Catholic.

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and, according to that copy after it had passed through his hands, there are (1) a few words which might seem to approve the removal of Elizabeth; (2) a postscript in which the murder of Elizabeth is openly alluded to, and the names of the six gentlemen are asked for. Mary had made out a fair copy of the letter she sent. It was taken down by her French secretary, and translated into English by another secretary. She kept this draft and sent her reply off on July 17, a week after the original letter. The forger and decipherer Philips and his master Walsingham kept Mary's letter till July 29, when they saw that it should reach Babington. He was arrested, Mary was kept away from her rooms, and her papers were seized, *including the notes of her reply to Babington and the draft of it which had been drawn up by her secretary.*

The next thing to do was to suppress a witness who on confrontation with Mary might have broken down, so Babington and his fellows were put to death. There was such sympathy with the victims that Elizabeth, who in her terror had suggested the special torturing of them, was not allowed to have her way. The condemned were divided into two lots. The first, in which were Babington and Ballard, whom it was important to get out of the way at once, were butchered in the approved manner. But public feeling was now so strong that the Government did not dare to act so with the second lot. They were not even drawn and quartered, but simply hanged. Three weeks after Babington had been got out of the way a committee of thirty-six appointed to try Mary appeared at the castle of Fotheringay, to which she had been removed as being a remote and isolated place where what was to be done could be done with the greatest freedom. The Queen of Scots denied her guilt, or any intention of abetting an attack on Elizabeth's life or any violence against her. She said that the so-called copies of her letters which had been produced contained forgeries—she had used no words approving of Elizabeth's death. *And she demanded that the original draft of the letters, which was in the possession of Walsingham, should be produced.* She also asked that her secretary should come into court.

Walsingham's action here is the crux of the whole affair, and can determine our judgment. He protested; he gave himself a public certificate for honesty, *but he suppressed the original draft*, and Mary's secretary was not examined before the

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court in her presence, but separately in London, where now Nau, that secretary who had taken the letter down from her original dictation, protested that the words used, construed as an assent to the murder of Elizabeth, were false, and summoned Mary's judges before the tribunal of God if they should condemn her on such false evidence—and we know from Walsingham's own admission that the postscript at the end of the letter was a forgery.

On October 29 a committee appointed to try her declared her guilty in her absence, without producing the original draft of the letters or even acting upon a record of the principal evidence. Cecil demanded immediate execution. He was determined to make Elizabeth responsible, and to make the killing of Mary Stuart an official act. Elizabeth struggled hard; she was now willing enough that her cousin should be killed, but not that she should be made responsible in the eye of Christendom for such a deed. She tried to get Paulet to have Mary privately assassinated, but Paulet was in with Cecil and had no fear of Elizabeth—he contemptuously refused. Elizabeth had signed the warrant, but continued to struggle against its being used. She told her secretary, Davison, not to deliver it. Cecil and those who served him paid no attention to her. They bade Davison give them the warrant, and on February 7, 1587, Mary's doom was announced to her. She asked for the Sacraments and was refused them. On the next day, Tuesday, February 8, 1587, she was beheaded in the hall at Fotheringhay at eight in the morning, and was buried in Peterborough Cathedral.

### THE TURN-OVER

**The Critical Point in the Religious Revolution.** In all the great revolutions of history there comes a period, which may be but a few days or may extend over several years, when the tide turns and when that which had been an effort, opposed to the general tendency of society, becomes itself a general tendency which the mass of men proceed to follow. The English Reformation was among the most important of all the revolutions in history; it was also among the most desperately disputed, the most gradual, and the longest in achievement. Like other revolutions, it was begun by a minority, at first a very small minority. We have seen the various accidents which

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promoted it, the reluctance of the nation to accept change, and the final slow but increasing pressure brought by the great Cecil which ultimately achieved its end and changed the character of the English people.

The turning-point in this long business comes into sight after the death of Mary Queen of Scots. It is approached in the last days of Elizabeth's reign (the sixteen years after 1587) and with Elizabeth's death in 1603, and is finally determined by the issue of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605-6.

After this last date (1605-6), though a very large minority remains attached in varying degrees to the Catholic tradition, England becomes more and more anti-Catholic. She is established as a Protestant nation. The whole thing is like the turning of a tide—at first Protestantism is advancing with great difficulty against a full, strong stream of national opinion; this slackens as Cecil's policy increasingly succeeds. After the death of Mary Stuart the stream had already lost much of its strength, and it begins to slacken more and more towards the end of the century. Then there is still water; then after 1605-6, eighty years after the beginning of the affair, the stream has definitely turned—it runs more and more strongly Protestant from the Gunpowder Plot onward; effort against it becomes increasingly difficult; the Catholic sympathizers, already a minority, lose heart, are divided, fear the accusation of being unpatriotic, and, in the course of over eighty years, slowly sink to become at last, after 1689, a fraction prepared for extinction.

**The New Conditions.** What made for the increasing approach to a turn-over between 1587 and 1605 were the following factors :

(1) With every year a smaller number of men, and those ageing, could remember the Mass. At the time of Mary's execution only men of middle age could remember the parish Mass of their boyhood; by 1605 the great majority of Englishmen had had no personal experience of it, and only old men from sixty onward could remember it dimly as a memory of childhood.

(2) The duel between the missionary priests and the Cecils was won by the latter. The error of trying to combine a defence of Catholicism with the support of Elizabeth destroyed the chances of the missionary effort.

(3) The rising generation, in so far as they received instruction—that is, in the governing and directing classes—were trained

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by anti-Catholic teachers. No one could be a schoolmaster or a tutor or a Fellow of a college save in conformity with the Government, and the general tone of such teaching as a whole was anti-Catholic and even Calvinist in spirit.

(4) There was being suggested, partly by design from above and partly instinctively from below, the worship of the nation in the place of the old creed; nationalism had begun to appear in its new mystical form—that is, as a sort of religion. This emotion was not to come to its full growth for many generations (it has reached its acme in our own day); but it was already vigorous in these last years of Elizabeth's reign. In so far as the Cecils originated it—and they certainly nurtured it—this change in the object of worship was their chief triumph, and it was a more profound religious change than the doctrinal one.

(5) Lastly we must remember the effect of the Armada—its failure strongly increased the national feeling, and a myth arose around it such as arises around all religious emotions; the failure of the Spanish Armada became a landmark and a point of departure.

**The Spanish Armada.** The word *armada* is only the Spanish for 'fleet,' and that the Spanish attempt of 1588, which necessarily depended upon a fleet, should be called Armada at all shows what an overwhelming place Spain held in the thoughts of the time. It is always so with the leading Power of any epoch—its terms are adopted by foreigners.

It was certain that the violent moral outrage of Mary's death would lead to some attempt upon Cecil's Government, and presumably this attempt would be met by the Spanish power, which had been steadily provoked by Cecil to the last point of endurance for the past fifteen years; one may even say for the past eighteen—since the detention of the Spanish ships and treasure. The Cecils sent Drake out to attack Spain openly in the same year that they had got rid of Mary, and that naval genius was not disappointed. Here again Elizabeth tried to prevent the thing. She recalled Drake; but her orders were not obeyed. In 1588 it was open war, and a Spanish fleet for the invasion of England was prepared.

Two points must be appreciated in connection with the effort Spain was about to make: first, what was thought of its chances, and, secondly, the attitude of the English towards it. As to its chances, they were known to be doubtful. It was to be com-

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manded by a landsman, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, but that, after all, was in the habit of the time; more significant is the fact that he was very doubtful of success. His force must necessarily consist mainly of transports, to the lessening of its fighting power; the English reputation for seamanship was deservedly high, and the supply of English ships very large; he would have to fight very far from any base, with no harbours available, save the one bad port of Dunkirk, for the Dutch rebels held the ports of the North Sea and the English and the French those of the Channel. The attack would be hampered by great numbers of soldiers, while the defence was free to concentrate wholly upon seamanship and marine gunnery, in which art land gunners were almost useless, being unaccustomed to train guns from a moving platform. Certain critics on the Spanish side were even so well acquainted with the true state of affairs that they appreciated the great advantage which the English would have from the type of their craft, which sailed closer to the wind than the Spanish transports could. A myth has arisen that the Armada was called "Invincible" by the Spanish—it is difficult to trace the origin of this legend; it grew up perhaps out of a chance phrase used by the Pope, who had spoken generally and flatteringly of Philip's "invincible arms." The mass of uninstructed opinion exaggerated the Spanish chances, as it always exaggerates the chances of whatever has been powerful in the immediate past, but those most in touch with the practical side of the business, the sailors, were also those who were most in doubt of success.

The English attitude towards the Armada was confused. The official version that the whole country was enthusiastic for the cause of the Cecils and Protestantism, or even for the repelling of the effort mainly because it was launched by a foreigner, is nonsense. The great quarrel of the time was still the religious quarrel, the crushing out of Catholicism in England by the Cecils; and though Protestantism had large support by 1588, it was still sincerely felt by no more than a minority. Had it been possible to land Spanish troops there would certainly have been a violent and widespread Catholic rising.

No one appreciated this better than Elizabeth herself, and she trimmed her policy accordingly. She took great care not to compromise herself by giving too enthusiastic a personal weight to the preparations made by Cecil's Government; she

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waited upon the issue, prepared to take advantage of it whichever side it should turn. On the other hand, the national feeling was strong, and all save a not very enthusiastic minority were repugnant to any foreign domination, even though it should act in favour of the still strong Catholic tradition of the country. Philip was far from being only the champion of Catholicism; he was also the champion of Spanish nationalism and the aggrandizement of the Habsburg power. He would probably have attempted to put forward his daughter, the Infanta, as a claimant to the throne of England. Many cases can be quoted of men, especially landed men, who, though as openly Catholic as they dared to be in such times, volunteered for opposing the foreign fleet. A number of these conformed in such a matter as they did in all others, from necessity; but the genuine feeling against foreign interference was strong even with them.

The command of the defending fleet was as a matter of course given to Elizabeth's cousin, the intensely anti-Catholic Lord Howard of Effingham,<sup>1</sup> for he was permanent Lord High Admiral of England. The Spanish fleet set sail on May 20, 1588, from the mouth of the Tagus; it was badly treated by the weather in the Bay of Biscay, and had to put back to refit. The sailor who should have commanded it, and who had tried hard to dissuade Philip from the attempt, died; and the Duke of Medina Sidonia (who was reluctant and protested that, being a landsman, he had no competence) was put in his place. The fleet set out again on July 12, and entered the Channel between five and six days later. It was off the coast of Devon a week after sailing, on July 19, and here the decisive mistake of the expedition was made. The English ships, not yet fully mobilized, were still divided into two groups, half of them at Plymouth and the other half up Channel near the Straits. The Spanish sea-captains advised attack on the half bottled up in Plymouth—an attack which would presumably be successful, for the Spaniards were in far greater force. But Philip had given the strictest orders

<sup>1</sup> The old myth that Howard of Effingham was Catholic in sentiment has a rather laughable origin. It is barely a hundred years old, and was started by Daniel O'Connell. That great Irish patriot was no historian; seeing the name Howard, he imagined that it necessarily connoted Catholicism, and brought it into a passionate speech for Catholic Emancipation, quoting Howard of Effingham as an example of his thesis that Catholics might always be trusted to be loyal to an anti-Catholic Government.

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that no diversion was to be made, and that the transports were to sail directly for the Flemish coast, and there to embark more troops for the invasion. As the Spaniards passed in front of Plymouth the English craft came out, running close-hauled between them and the shore (the wind being south-west), and followed them up Channel. They attempted no more than to harass the enemy, upon whom they had little effect; only three ships were lost, and one not from attack, but by the plunder of its own crew.

The weather was cyclonic—that is, a week of strong winds from the south-west which would gradually veer northward as the depression passed east, over England. Therefore during the whole of this running fight up the Channel the English ships had what is called the wind-gauge; lying to the windward of the enemy, they could manœuvre freely, and, further, they heeled over towards the enemy, who, on his side, heeled away from the wind. The English shots thus struck the hulls and crews and guns of the Spaniards. On Saturday, July 27, 1598, the Spanish fleet came to anchor off the low-lying sandy coast from Calais eastward towards Dunkirk. During the night, as it lay there, fire-ships were sent among it with the tide, which floated them eastward after the early evening. Under this menace the Spaniards cut their cables and ran eastward. With the next day, the wind having gone still farther to the north, so that there was no chance of the Spaniards pointing up weather towards the English coast, a general action was engaged. In this the well-handled English craft, smaller but at least equal to the Spanish in efficiency and carrying somewhat heavier metal, had a decided advantage,<sup>1</sup> the enemy running east all day under the increasing wind and in continual danger from a lee-shore. Before night fell on that Sunday the Spanish effort had failed. And, what is more, the reinforcements which the transports had hoped to take on board had not synchronized, and were not present for embarkation. The Spaniards ran up the North Sea, and in a succession of gales had no choice but to go north about, round Scotland, and outside Ireland, in their attempt to regain their own ports in the south. There was a succession of storms; ship after ship was lost, thirty-two of the largest disappeared—

<sup>1</sup> The English fleet was the more numerous in the proportion of nineteen to thirteen, and somewhat better handled: its total tonnage probably less than the enemy's.

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only a quarter of the total number, but probably half the total tonnage. Half the men were gone by the time the Armada returned home.

Elizabeth, who had kept in the background all the time to see who would win, now came forward—after a fortnight—was greeted with enthusiasm, and reviewed the militia at Tilbury.

**The Episode of Essex.** The last years of Elizabeth's reign after the Armada are filled with two things—the episode of Essex and the beginning of a conquest of Ireland.

The episode of Essex was as follows :

Essex, who had been a handsome lad of twenty at the time of the Armada, was of the Devereux family, and therefore stood, in a fashion, for the old nobility of whom the Reformation group, headed by Cecil, were so jealous. Elizabeth's mania for successive frustrated amours—none other were open to her—became with increasing years something not quite sane. Leicester, who had been her chief attraction for so many years, died in the six weeks after the failure of the Armada. He was the lover of Essex's mother and the poisoner of Essex's father, whose widow he bigamously married; he thus became the stepfather of young Essex. It was under such auspices that the young man fell into Elizabeth's favour, in spite of his marriage with the widow of Philip Sidney (so close was the clique). Elizabeth's dealings with him were Anjou all over again, only more disgraceful: the connection of a young man under thirty with an old woman thirty-four years his senior. Essex accepted the position—to his shame—for the great advantages it brought him; but he was ill at ease. He talked contemptuously of the doting Queen and ridiculed her "crooked carcase." But she would not be cured of her infatuation.

Essex took command of an expedition against Spain in 1596, where he was fully successful, capturing, looting, and burning the town of Cadiz, destroying the Spanish shipping and bringing back with him great treasure. It is typical of the unfortunate Elizabeth's false position that, like all the other courtiers of the time, he enriched himself at her expense, and refused to hand over the booty which was legally the property of the Treasury. She put him at the head of the national forces the next year, but she chafed against his insolence; on one occasion she struck him, and the relations between them became what they could not but be—as strained as they were tainted. He, of course, was

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more and more disgusted, but she had not the command over herself to consider her dignity; she still doted.

An influence of this kind was some peril to the power of the Cecils. Burghley, now growing very old but still at the helm of the state, was determined that his second son Robert—a dwarf in stature, humpbacked, but the rival of his father in intelligence and tenacity—should continue his efforts and tradition, and hold the same power that he had. From 1590 onward, after Walsingham's death, he worked unceasingly for this object, and Robert Cecil, whom his father had thoroughly trained, worked hard as well. They pretended friendship with Essex, but it was Essex who stood in their way, and for some time after his father-in-law's death he acted as Secretary. He had already had his way against the Cecils in the policy of attacking Spain, and he was for a time almost as much in control of affairs as they were, on account of his unnatural hold over the old Queen. In this duel the Cecils necessarily won, for there was nothing in Essex; he had no capacity for government. But, still, he was dangerous to Cecil's plan. Old Burghley died in 1598 at the age of seventy-eight years, and thenceforward his son Robert succeeded to his power.

Within a year of Burghley's death an intrigue in which many joined (for the ambition of Essex was odious on all sides) sent Essex off to Ireland with 18,000 men and an ample sum of money to take part in the conquest of that country. Hearing that during his absence from court his influence was declining, he returned in the autumn of the year, and appeared unannounced before Elizabeth, who was torn between her remaining mania for the young man (he was just over thirty) and her bitterness against him for his contempt and robbery of her. Robert Cecil began to work for his death. Elizabeth was persuaded to have Essex stand a sort of trial, in which the animosities he had aroused appeared with great violence. The younger Bacon, Robert Cecil's cousin, the lawyer later famous as a philosopher—a man whom Essex himself had helped to advance—was the most violent of all. Essex was allowed to go free, but he never recovered his old position; his income was diminished, and towards the end of the year 1600 he planned to reinstate himself by force and to defeat the power of the younger Cecil in arms.

But Cecil's faction was far the more powerful; it had the

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support among others of Walter Raleigh, a great popular figure who had fought in Ireland, attempted to colonize the American coast (and failed); yet another of those whom Elizabeth had greatly favoured and who felt as much as Cecil did the rivalry of Essex, under whom he had served at Cadiz, and by whose advice as much as anything the victory of Cadiz had been won. Raleigh urged Cecil "not to relent." A group of discontented men gathered round Essex, who seemed at one moment likely to become the leader of either the new Puritan or the old Catholic faction. On February 7, 1601, Essex was summoned before the court; he refused to come, made public proclamation that his life was in danger, and with a small body of armed companions, including some six or eight of the peers, he entered the city, where he expected a rising in his favour. No such rising took place; he surrendered to the forces of the Crown on a promise that he should have an open trial. Meanwhile Robert Cecil had used his father's old trump card and terrified the Queen by telling her that Essex intended to murder her, so, after his trial by his peers, the poor old sovereign once more signed a death warrant against every prompting of her nature, and on February 25, 1601, Essex was put to death.

### **The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland and its Results.**

The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland was the first step in the effort to destroy Ireland as a nation, of which the Cromwellian conquest a lifetime later was the second.

It was not under Elizabeth, but in the previous reign of the Catholic sovereigns Philip and Mary that the disastrous policy of 'plantation' was begun in Ireland. Leix and Offaly, the territories of the O'Mores and the O'Conors, had during the period of confusion in the nominal reign of Edward VI been occupied in one of the perpetual struggles between the English forces acting from the neighbouring Pale (the district of Dublin under direct English rule) and the native chiefs. Philip and Mary's Government confiscated this land, called it King's County and Queen's County, and proposed to settle English owners and cultivators in the place of the native owners. It is claimed that actual settlement was not achieved: perhaps because the reign so soon ended. But the intention was there, and the tyrannical policy had begun.

In the first years of Elizabeth's reign the main action lay not in plantation but in a fight between Irish chieftains, one of

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whom, Shane O'Neill, made himself virtually independent in the north, in spite of war against him waged by Irish opponents who allied themselves with the English power. Shane was killed (after the English Governor, Essex—father of the favourite—had failed to poison him) by other Irishmen who had at last defeated him. It is after the date of this, 1567, that the evil period of treacherous massacre and wholesale robbery begins, and it corresponds with that other turning-point in Elizabeth's reign, the Catholic rising, the Excommunication of the Queen, Cecil's killing of Norfolk, and the new era of savage persecution in which the effort to crush out the traditional religion in England seriously begins.

Henceforward all the attack on Ireland is increasingly mixed up with religion. Ireland was wholly Catholic—with here and there an exception such as the great Irish nobles, the Ormondes, Elizabeth's cousin through the Boleyns. The Irish national cause became a Catholic cause and sought the support of Spain. Cecil's Government had made Catholicism synonymous with opposition to his new-found power. This religious motive produced the murderous character of the struggle. Even those who had supported the English government in Ireland, such as MacPhelim O'Neill of Clondeboyne, were betrayed. He and two hundred of his chief men were asked to a feast by the English Governor and there slaughtered by their hosts. The same thing happened shortly after in Leix, where the O'Mores had recovered part of their land. They were asked to a peaceful parley, set upon by concealed soldiers, and murdered wholesale. A Spanish landing on a small scale was defeated, and all those who surrendered were, after being promised their lives, put to death. Desmond rose and was defeated. All the land he had ruled was declared confiscated and allotted for plantation, among others to the poet Spenser, whose solution for the difficulties in Ireland was a complete extermination of the Irish people. A strong reaction drove him and the rest out. There followed a series of nationalist revolts and independent successes culminating in Tyrone's regular campaign with artillery which was successful against the younger Essex—the favourite—just at the end of Elizabeth's reign. A counter-attack with more guns under Essex's successor won in the north, and when a second and larger Spanish body landed in the south an attempt of the nationalist and Catholic forces to join it was wholly defeated.

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Tyrone was still holding out in the north when Elizabeth died in 1603, but by the first year of the next reign the last independent sub-sovereignty in Ireland was at an end.

By this time the land was in famine, the north filled with ruins. In 1607 Tyrone fled abroad, and the other great native chieftain in the north, Tyrconnell, with him. They died in Rome. Ulster was confiscated, and a regular permanent plantation of it from England and Scotland began. Great tracts were given to the Corporation of London which gave its name to the city of Derry. In the rest of Ireland actual dispossession of those on the land was rarer, but in some thirty years, just before the opening of the Great Rebellion in England, there were in Ireland out of every twenty acres nine in the possession of Protestants, mostly alien (one-eighth of the population), to eleven in the possession of native Catholic owners. The old Celtic organization of society, in which every man had land under his chief, was destroyed, and nearly half the people were tilling for others, at a rent or a wage, the fields which had so recently been their own.

**The End of Elizabeth.** The miserable old Queen never got over the blow of Essex's execution. Yet she now had much that might have helped her through those last wretched few months. She had become popular with the generation which dated from the Armada; she was more fully supported by her subjects than ever she had been before; she could look back upon a reign in which all efforts to oust her from the throne had failed, and in which all her rivals had been defeated, but she knew that she had never been really the ruler, and now in her last years she despaired. Her death was a very unhappy one, preceded by bad nervous trouble—nightmares and evil visions. After long sitting silent on the floor, propped up, with her finger in her mouth, staring, she died in the early hours of Friday, March 24, 1603.

## JAMES I

### THE CRISIS OF THE GUNPOWDER PLOT

**The New Reign.** To the very end of Elizabeth's life she refused to name an heir, though the succession depended, of course, upon the will of the monarch—the idea of a Parlia-

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mentary title succession is a modern fiction. She had always refused to name anyone as her certain heir, lest a handle should be given for a conspiracy against her, and in her last hours she had not the capacity to think clearly of anything. There were four possibilities for the succession.

(1) By Henry VIII's will, which had hitherto governed the succession three separate times, the proper heir was Lord Beauchamp; he was the son of Catherine Grey and inherited the rights of Henry's younger sister, Mary, whose descendants, in case his own children had no heirs, had been expressly mentioned in his will as coming next in the succession. He was also on his father's side the grandson of the Protector Somerset, which, though having nothing to do with his claim, strengthened his position. He also stood for the anti-Catholic policy in full.

(2) Arabella Stuart had a better claim than Beauchamp in *blood*, for her father's grandmother had been the eldest Tudor princess, Margaret, who had become Queen of Scotland. But a better claim than hers was that of

(3) Elizabeth's cousin, James VI, King of Scotland, the son of Mary Queen of Scots. He also was descended from the Scottish line which had not been mentioned in Henry's will and which it was therefore presumed that Henry intended to exclude. In blood he was the rightful heir to the throne of England, as his mother Mary Queen of Scots had been before him.

(4) The Infanta, the last claimant, was in a position which seems to us to-day fantastic, but was in that time a very serious one. The Infanta Isabella of Spain, the daughter of Philip II (who had died rather more than four years before) and the sister of the reigning King Philip III, claimed as a Plantagenet descended from John of Gaunt, thus harking back to the old feeling against the Tudors as usurpers, a feeling now quite dead. The reason that the claim of the Infanta, absurd as it seems to us to-day, was seriously taken was that she alone of the claimants represented the full Catholic tradition, and there was a small, vigorous faction in England, known as the Spanish Party, who supported her claim. Robert Cecil himself had certainly pretended to support it, but probably only in order to keep a better hold over James, to whom he caused a pension to be paid, and whom he had for some time desired to put upon the English

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throne. For James, ever since he had acquiesced in his mother's death, had worked in and in with the Cecils.

On the same morning that Elizabeth died Carey, her cousin (a great-nephew of Anne Boleyn's), took horse, and after an astonishing ride of nearly four hundred miles in fifty-six hours appeared at the court of James VI and gave him the news. James at once set off southward, and Robert Cecil put him on the throne—just as Robert Cecil's father had put Elizabeth on the throne.

**The Gunpowder Plot.** James, though now proclaimed King of England and duly crowned, was not yet secure upon the throne. The debates on the succession had been too prolonged and too violent for that. The King was a Scotsman, and Scotsmen were at that date aliens in England and even hereditary enemies; and also the power of Robert Cecil was an object of envy and dislike to many of the greater men.

Among these was Walter Raleigh, who had worked with Cecil against Essex, and who now proposed to oust him; for such personal treason was in the very spirit of the little set to which they all belonged. He tried to reach James before Cecil could get at him, and failed. Then he began to plot; he approached the King of France and the husband of the Infanta, and was obviously putting himself into a position for prosecution by the Government. Cecil had intercepted his letters and had plenty of evidence against him. He and his fellow-conspirators were condemned to death at the end of the year 1603. Robert Cecil was for putting all of them to death, and especially Raleigh, but James (whose abilities will be discussed in a moment) played a clever card. Among the conspirators were two Catholic priests; he put *them* to death, to confirm his anti-Catholic attitude; but he reprieved the others, especially Raleigh, for whom there was such strong popular feeling on account of his fine presence and gallant actions by sea and land; but he kept him secure in the Tower. In the face of this insecurity, which the condemnation of Raleigh's plot had by no means ended, new strength was necessary for James. It was still more necessary to Cecil, for his great peril was that the whole effort pursued by his father and himself might be undermined in the new reign.

James had been brought up a Calvinist, but not consecutively nor continuously so. The Catholic faction in Scotland had attempted to capture him, and there was a moment when their

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efforts might have succeeded. Also he had a strange loyalty to the memory of his mother, whose death he had secretly approved. Further, he desired to stand firm with all his subjects, and this he could best do by toleration. The ceaseless and drastic persecution of Catholicism had not destroyed it; half the nation, more or less, still held to the tradition of the old religion, some few of the very greatest men were openly attached to it, and very many were still willing to sacrifice heavily in goods and personal risk rather than abandon it. James had promised toleration during the last years of Elizabeth's reign, should he come to the throne; but Cecil knew well that if toleration were to be adopted as a policy increasing numbers would openly return to the old religion. That would affect the whole state—the Catholics might even predominate, and certainly he and all that he stood for, both by his family tradition and by the nature of the group which surrounded him and through whom he worked, would lose their power. In such a crisis there took place an event which settled everything in Cecil's favour and was the final triumph of the Cecil family—the final establishment of that they had worked for so steadfastly for half a century. This event was the Gunpowder Plot.

We cannot be certain whether the Gunpowder Plot was started by secret agents of Robert Cecil's—as we are certain that the Babington plot was started by secret agents of his father and Walsingham—we cannot affirm that it was deliberately got up with the object it so well served; very many contemporaries were of that opinion, but proof is lacking. What is *certain* is that, whether the plotters were egged on by secret agents or no, and whether the man who was most prominent among the conspirators was or was not acting with Cecil's knowledge, a group of men gathered who were violently opposed to the Government and sincere in their intention of following the plan proposed to them. We also have evidence that the plan was already known to Robert Cecil a few days at latest after it began, if not before, and was carefully watched by him and nursed. But the details which we have on documentary evidence are not such as to make us certainly ascribe the origin of the affair to Cecil; on the contrary, they would rather point to its having arisen spontaneously, and only to have been nursed by Cecil after it was under way.

In some day of March, and probably towards the middle of

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March,<sup>1</sup> certainly before the end of March 1604, a wealthy landed Catholic, by name Robert Catesby, took in two other Catholic gentlemen of his own rank and proposed a plot against the Government.

The large Catholic body in England (using the term 'Catholic' in its restricted sense, to mean, not all those who still more or less sympathized with Catholicism, but only those who, at great risk of life and fortune, were prepared to practise it and refused to accept the Established Church) had been severely disappointed by James's breaking his promise of toleration. They had further been goaded by the rigour which Robert Cecil tried to use against the old religion, continuing the full Cecil tradition in this matter. We know that the Government had wind of a plot within a month, when one of their secret agents writes to that effect. The plotters took in other sympathizers, including Thomas Percy, a relative of the strongly Catholic Earl of Northumberland,<sup>2</sup> and they made active use of a brave and simple Catholic soldier, of lower birth than themselves, one who had served in the foreign wars—by name Guido Faukes. It was proposed to them that they should blow up the Houses of Parliament (or, more accurately, the chamber in which the House of Lords met) on the day when James should next open Parliament. This was to have been on February 7, 1605, eleven months or so after the conspiracy began. Under the room where the House of Lords was to meet there was an open shed or vaulting on the ground level, the arches of which supported the room above, where the King would open Parliament. This so-called 'cellar' was hired, and a number of barrels of gunpowder were stored there, ostensibly without detection; but it was impossible that the storing of them had not been known to the Government, for gunpowder was a monopoly, and the barrels had to be brought across the Thames in several loads. Further, the cellar was not secret in any way, but could be visited by pretty well anyone. The barrels were concealed under a number of faggots, but the place where they stood was fully lit from the arches, which, it must be remembered, were, like the whole place, above ground, not below.

<sup>1</sup> There is documentary evidence for the time, "mid Lent." Easter that year fell on April 8; but it must be remembered that the documentary evidence is itself doubtful, for it is only found in a so-called confession which may not have been a confession at all—that of Thomas Winter.

<sup>2</sup> James had restored Northumberland in blood.

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Garnett. Garnett was put in the Tower, the governor of which was ordered to pretend sympathy and give him freedom to communicate with another priest. Their conversations were overheard by Government spies secreted near by. Garnett was not proved to have said anything that would have incriminated him, but he injured himself by first denying that the conversations had been held at all and then admitting them. He was put to death on May 9, 1606, by which date the episode of the Gunpowder Plot may be said to end.

### PROTESTANT ENGLAND FAIRLY LAUNCHED

**Character of James I.** James I of England and VI of Scotland, whose secure reign begins after the Gunpowder Plot, was to Englishmen a foreigner. He spoke Scotch rather than English, with an accent so pronounced that many Englishmen could hardly understand him. He was at that moment a man of just on forty, large, ungainly, with legs so weak that he was always leaning against people or things—usually people—and a clumsy mouth with a tongue too big for it, and eyes that rolled in his head. He had an excellent intelligence and very wide reading, and, after his fashion, a strong will, determined to maintain the principle of monarchy. He did not appreciate how the increasing financial difficulties of the Crown would rapidly undermine monarchy in his own time and destroy it in his son's. He had a vivid but odd and twisted imagination, too much interested in witchcraft, demons, and torture; and he was inclined to be vicious, with an absurd dependence upon young favourites, of whom the last, Villiers (Buckingham), really shared with him the rule of England in the second half of his reign. But he was fairly energetic, and filled his court with rough horse-play. In religion he had been mainly brought up Calvinist, and the Calvinist influence was always strong in him, but he was acutely sensitive to the prestige of Catholicism, as being the general European religion and that of all the great courts of the day, for, like all English monarchs since the Middle Ages, he was eager to affirm that the King of England was equal to the King of Spain or the King of France, though possessed of far less resources and population. He was determined not to have the Calvinist form of Church government, but to insist upon bishops in Scotland as well as in England,

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and his real antagonism to the Church of Rome lay not in points of doctrine, but in its universality—that is, in the power of the Papacy, which clashed with the Divine Right of Kings—a peculiarly Protestant doctrine first proclaimed, it will be remembered, in England a lifetime ago by Cranmer at Edward VI's coronation and naturally supported by James.

### **The Country getting Richer, the Crown getting Poorer.**

The economic state of the time (1605–25) was that of a country rapidly getting richer through trade, and of a Government getting more and more embarrassed. The decline in wealth and the general social misery which had marked Elizabeth's reign did not continue to the end of it. The country began to pick up towards the end of the sixteenth century. The impoverishment of the poorer people went on uninterruptedly, but trade was growing as England's favoured position for transport southward and westward by the Atlantic began to be appreciated. London in particular increased in wealth, the greater people at the expense of the smaller, but the whole advancing. The number of English people dispossessed in the countrysides had increased steadily since the Reformation, but probably something like half England was still made up of an independent peasantry inheriting the land on which they lived, and subject only to dues and not to competitive rent. But the Government could no longer live on its regular revenue;<sup>1</sup> prices had risen so much and the necessities of the modern state were such that the executive was compelled somehow or other to find nearly double that regular revenue on which it was supposed to carry on. Every trick and device was resorted to by way of filling the gap—gifts, loans, pressure upon the Catholics by way of fines—but still the gulf between necessary expenditure and the total of the royal revenue grew wider and wider. Before the end of the reign the royal income was not worth much more than half of what had to be paid for by the state. Therefore it became necessary to appeal to the richer landowners assembled in Parliament for official grants from time to time. This gave them a new power, of which they were not slow to take advantage.

**The Colonies.** Under James I began the English colonial

<sup>1</sup> The regular revenue did not come from taxes, as to-day, but from the income of the Crown in rents, dues, fines, customs, etc. Taxes were then exceptional levies.

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system. It was something sacred in the morals of the time that Christian princes should not compete with one another for the newly discovered lands, nor trade with the ports of those princes save under such regulations as they might have made. The Spaniards and Portuguese had been first in the field, and had fixed their settlements all over the far shore of the Atlantic, save to the north of Florida. From thence, right up to the Arctic regions, there was opportunity for settlement. The disadvantage of most of this seaboard lay in the long and horribly cold winter, of a sort to which Western Europeans were quite unaccustomed. In the southern half of this territory the adventurers of the last reign had attempted to found a colony to which had been given the name of Virginia, strangely associated with Elizabeth herself, but the effort had come to nothing, and the last miserable survivors had to be shipped away. But now under James the first small beginnings of the English colonies began, a century later than the much larger experiments of Spain. Just after the Gunpowder Plot more than a hundred colonists went out and settled on the river which was then called James (after the King), forming Jamestown. The Spaniards had been there long before, but had not stayed. The cultivation of tobacco, the staple of the place, began, and the characteristic institution of slavery appeared after a dozen years. The colony was a royal colony, part and parcel of the English dominions and following the royal religion; the old name of the abandoned Virginia was continued, applying to a much larger length of coast than the shore of the present state of that name. On the northern part of the coast, where the winters made a very different climate, another quite separate effort at colonization took place more than a dozen years later than that of Virginia. It grew out of two original colonies settled in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. These settlements remained quite small, but before the end of the reign they had been strengthened by the arrival of a group of immigrants who added to the desire for gain by trade (they had been financed with that object) an intense Puritanism which had already led numbers of them to leave England for Holland before making this new venture. The Crown had given them leave to occupy land pretty well anywhere on the northern coast; had such extension been adopted it would have gone beyond the Dutch settlements in the centre, on the Hudson. But in practice the

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new group, called New England, was separated from and quite distinct from the old group, called Virginia. An important thing to note about these colonies is that, finding themselves, unlike the Spaniards, in a country empty of all save a few savages, they could not but organize themselves in the manner which men always adopt when there is no tradition of government—that is, they grouped themselves in self-governing units—and the idea of democracy, which is inseparable from very simple and small communities, took root. Before James died the situation on the Atlantic seaboard was as follows:

North of somewhere about parallel 35 went the territory vaguely called Virginia, settlements on the James river and around it, with four or five thousand inhabitants; then, round about the mouth of the Hudson, a Dutch settlement, which had begun at much the same time as Massachusetts, twelve or thirteen years after Virginia; then the two Puritan settlements of New England, round about Massachusetts Bay. And north of these came a few French settlers. No one paid much attention at the time to the "American plantations" from England; they were nothing compared to the Spanish Empire, and, except for Virginian tobacco, which was beginning to be used, they made little impression upon the English mind. Their origins are only important to us to-day because they happen to have grown so vastly since then, and because a lifetime later they began to be of some weight (growing to a quarter of a million inhabitants), and two lifetimes later were the deciding point in the great quarrel with France.

**The Death of Raleigh.** In 1618, while the first colonization of America was proceeding, came the fall and death of Sir Walter Raleigh, which was of the first importance because it marked the end of the piracies. In other words, it was the close of a situation which under Elizabeth had become intolerable, when England had been continuously imperilled, and no one had benefited, except the rapacious courtiers (and the Queen, who was dragged in their wake), by acts which made the regular Governments more and more hostile to this country. Sir Walter Raleigh lay, it will be remembered, under sentence of death for having conspired against the Throne, but he had not been executed; he held a very great position in the public eye, he was popular as well, and James had thought it politic to spare him.

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Raleigh now proposed to go out to Guiana, where he believed there were gold-mines, and make an English settlement there and get the gold. This was a great attraction to James's Government, which licensed him to go, but as there were already Spanish settlements in the district he was particularly ordered, in writing and with the greatest emphasis, not to take these; and to trade only with natives in districts where no Christian power had asserted itself. Raleigh set out in the early season of 1617; in the winter and spring of the succeeding year he was proceeding to find the supposed gold-mine up the Orinoco river. To get to this supposed gold-mine he marched with an armed force through the Spanish settlement of St Thomas; he killed the governor in action and occupied the town. There was no gold—Raleigh had acted in the most criminal fashion and had nothing to show for it; he returned in great dread to England, and after attempts to escape was put to death under the old sentence on October 29, 1618. He showed the greatest courage and even cheerfulness, but he made no effort to excuse his conduct—which was, indeed, inexcusable.

Apart from Raleigh's death the latter part of James's reign contains two notable activities: the beginnings of the struggle with the gentry (which was to end in the destruction of the Crown) and the attempt to save the Palatinate.

**The First Signs of Struggle between the Crown and the Gentry.** The mark of the time being the impoverishment of the Crown and the enrichment of the landed gentry and merchants, especially the city of London, a conflict was certain to arise, for government could only be carried on by begging from the wealthier classes for exceptional extraordinary grants of money from time to time. The organ through which these grants of money could be most regularly obtained was Parliament. Parliament in those days meant a body summoned for short occasions and at fairly long intervals by the King, mainly for the purpose of getting these exceptional grants, which, it must again be remembered, were voluntary and not regarded as a regular part of the revenue, but as being made with some reluctance and not as of right, but as of grace by the wealthier men of the country. Parliament consisted of the House of Lords, which was composed of the greater landowners, including certain officials who had been raised to it and, if they had not inherited, had acquired

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landed wealth. There was attached to it the much larger body called the House of Commons, which was composed of members of the gentry, including often a few lawyers and merchants, sent up by order of the King through the sheriffs from the countrysides and from a large number of towns. There was no idea of representation in our modern sense; two groups of houses in the depths of Cornwall, mere villages, if they had charters and were summoned as boroughs, would count as much in numbers in the Commons as the whole of the city of London, which had at least half the liquid wealth of the country in its hands, three-quarters of its foreign trade, and as large a population as all the other few great towns put together. The great mass of Englishmen occupied in agriculture sent no one, but the gentlemen who came, two from each shire, and who were much less than one-quarter of the House, might be said to be in touch with them. The rest were sent to speak for the host of little boroughs, only a fraction of which were even what we should call market-towns of any size. These members who stood for the boroughs were also gentry and usually local gentry.

It had hitherto been considered something of a disadvantage to be compelled to take the long journey to town at the orders of the sheriff (though the members were paid for that and for their time), but as it gradually appeared that these assemblies of the rich afforded opportunities for gain and advancement, and were increasing in power over the government of the country, a seat in the Commons became desirable, and the reign of James I is the period in which this new state of affairs appeared.

The King had as a matter of immemorial practice to summon a Parliament on his accession; it would then go through the ritual of granting him the customs for life, strengthen his new reign by the adhesion of the wealthier classes, and in a sort of vague fashion speak for the whole community. James had held a first Parliament like this, in which, even so early, there had been signs of interference with the King. In 1614, when Cecil (latterly Earl of Salisbury), who had hitherto governed side by side with the King, was already dead, he had to summon a Parliament under the acute necessity for money. There was a debt of more than two-thirds of a million, and one-fifth of a million deficit yearly. Already, five years before, the Parliament he had

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summoned had questioned the King's right to settle the amount of the duties levied on goods entering the ports; now, in 1614, they began again, and the Parliament was dissolved rather than allow its usurpation to continue. But in 1621 it was necessary to try the experiment again, dangerous though it was, and the King hoped that he would have better fortune, because the affairs of the Palatinate, which we shall come to later, had made the Crown very popular for the moment, especially on account of their strongly Protestant character, with the men who had formed the House of Commons. By this time the encroachment of the gentry upon the Crown went even farther than before; they openly defied the power of the King to grant patents—that is, monopolies out of which he could make revenue. They were stronger than ever against the increase of the customs by the Government, and, what was more revolutionary still, they tried to constitute themselves directors of foreign policy. This was, to the ideas of that time, outrageous; the King, who stood for the whole community, was the only person who could decide that, but the reason that the gentry in the House of Commons interfered was the intensity of their Protestant feeling, which had been inflamed by the misfortunes of the Protestants on the Continent, and notably those of the King's son-in-law, the Elector Palatine. Parliament was dissolved by the King in anger, and he punished the more prominent of those who had supported these novel claims—among whom should be noticed the name of the lawyer Pym, a man protected by the very wealthy Russell family. He was imprisoned for a while, and so was the millionaire Reformation peer Southampton (Wriothesley), who had made himself prominent in the new movement.

Before leaving these beginnings of the usurpation of power by the wealthier classes in Parliament against the King we should understand why the House of Commons in particular was so strongly anti-Catholic, at least as a body, though the degree of feeling varied very much, and some of the members were rather upon the other side. The reason was this. First, the House of Commons was necessarily official even when it was beginning to be opposed to the King. Secondly, the anti-Catholic feeling was strongest in the towns, among the merchants and the craftsmen. Now, though these did not 'elect' their members in the modern sense, yet they would not have accepted

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a member who was strongly antagonistic to their general feeling. The vast majority of Englishmen lived by agriculture and had nothing to do with borough representation; they could not meet in any considerable numbers as a rule to affect in any way the choice of the knights of the shire who were to be sent to the Parliaments. A majority of agricultural England was by this time, of course, opposed to Catholicism, and perhaps hardly one-third of the squires and their tenants were still in sympathy with it by, say, 1620. Thirdly, the Catholics as a body were lukewarm; they varied from those who remained in vague sympathy with the old religion to the rare men who were ready to make heavy sacrifices in its favour. And even such as were quite openly Catholic differed in their policy, and all save a very few were now reluctant to have their loyalty to a Protestant king questioned. There was dispute on the Oath of Supremacy; most Catholics desired to take that oath in some form which would not directly deny the Catholic doctrine of unity, and James was eager to meet them. But they could never get a sufficiently definite pronouncement permitting them to take the oath in a modified form; their ecclesiastical authorities would not give it. Lastly, there was behind the whole Protestant movement in England—which now commanded a considerable majority, and a majority which was increasing every year—the driving-force of enthusiasm. The Puritan movement, though in minority, was most active and was rising; it had affected a great number of the squires and the wealthy merchants, and therefore made itself felt in the House of Commons on such rare occasions as that body was summoned to meet at the Government orders.

**The Affair of the Palatinate.** The business of the Palatinate, the second interest of the later reign, was as follows:

The King had not been fortunate in his family relations. His cousin Arabella Stuart having claims to the throne second only to his own, and having married the son of that Lord Beauchamp who had been proposed to the throne in the place of James before Elizabeth's death, James saw no way out of it but to imprison her in the Tower, where she not long afterwards died mad.

His eldest son, Prince Henry, upon whom all his hopes had been set, had died in 1612, leaving a delicate boy in his thirteenth year, Charles, as the only chance of continuing the line.

His daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, had been married the

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year after, 1613, to that one of the Protestant German princes, the Elector Palatine, who was Calvinist and stood most clearly of all for the Protestant interest. This foolish young man was flattered into believing that he could usurp the crown of Bohemia. The King of Bohemia, who had been duly elected to that position and crowned, was the Archduke Ferdinand, who was also the heir to the Empire. Partly from religious feeling, but more from the Slav hatred of the Germans, certain of the wealthier men in Bohemia, with a strong party behind them, rebelled and offered the crown to the Elector Palatine, who accepted it in October 1619.

The usurper was easily turned out early in the next year, but the opinion of all that was Protestant in England—which was now not only the majority of the nation, but the main driving-power—sympathized violently with the King's daughter and her husband, a sympathy which was largely shared by those who had no strong Protestant feeling but in whom the growing national feeling was exasperated. It was this strong feeling in favour of a member of the royal family which had caused James to summon his last Parliament, as we have seen. But England obviously was not powerful enough to interfere, let alone send an army into the heart of Germany against the best troops in Europe, the Spanish infantry—for the Habsburg house of Spain was working in support of the Habsburg house of Austria and Ferdinand, who was the head of it. But what was more, the hereditary districts of the Elector Palatine, the Palatinate, were declared forfeit, on account of his treason, and handed over to the Elector of Bavaria.

James therefore relied upon diplomacy; he would try to call off the Spaniards so that his son-in-law might at least be allowed to keep his hereditary dominions. The best way to make this policy successful was to arrange for an alliance by marriage between his house and that of the King of Spain. While his son Henry lived there had been negotiations for a French marriage of the same sort, but France could not be relied upon to risk war for the sake of the Palatinate, though she was anti-Austrian in sympathy, whereas Spain might be of the greatest use to intervene with the Emperor for leaving at least the Palatinate to its original owner. Hence the policy of the Spanish marriage.

**Villiers and the Spanish Marriage.** The King had during

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this time at his side, largely sharing in the powers of government, a most remarkable young man, by name George Villiers, whom he had taken up for a favourite in the years 1614-16. James's first favourite had been an unpleasant Scotchman called Carr, very unpopular, married to a detestable wife, and falling under circumstances which deprived him of any sympathy. Villiers was in quite a different position; he was not only good-looking but brave and of a generous nature, from eighteen to twenty years old when he was first rising at the court, an Englishman in the midst of all these Scotchmen, and, what was more important to the history of England, a man not without genius. To him the country owes the first continuous and energetic policy for the creation of a national navy. James had advanced him most extravagantly, making him a peer two years after his entry to court, when the young man was barely twenty-four, and Marquis of Buckingham two years later. He was also given valuable offices, and, luckily for the country, that of the Admiralty. He had also become the close friend, adviser, and guide of the reticent, shy young Prince and heir, Charles, between eight and nine years his junior.

Buckingham entered heartily into his master's scheme for a Spanish alliance, persuaded Prince Charles to it without difficulty, and at the suggestion of the Spanish Ambassador made a romantic journey to Madrid. There, however, the match met with resistance; Buckingham found himself foiled and retired in anger with Prince Charles to England. The Spanish marriage had been unpopular in England, and Buckingham on his return became a sort of hero as being the man who had destroyed the Spanish match. In the place of it a marriage for Charles was arranged with Henrietta Maria, the young sister of the French King, and an attempt was made to relieve the Elector Palatine by the use of English troops. The expedition failed miserably because Parliament, which Buckingham had summoned for the purpose, would not grant sufficient sums for the 12,000 men required. This expedition, known as the Mansfield Expedition from the name of the Protestant German general who was entrusted with it, ended in the destruction of the forces by disease, and the expedition got no farther than the Dutch island of Walcheren, where it went to pieces.

In the midst of these misfortunes King James died, not without piety, on March 27, 1625.

## X

# THE BREAKDOWN OF KINGSHIP

## CHARLES I

### THE REBELLION RISES

**Character of the New King.** The young King Charles, James's only surviving son, when he came to the throne in March 1625 was only twenty-four years of age. The ill-health of his early years, his seclusion until the death of his elder brother—which was only partly broken by that death—and a certain inheritance in him made him what he was: a man tiny of stature, very neat, very dignified, long and melancholy in feature, stammering somewhat, speaking with the Scottish accent of his family, shrinking from personal contact, but never shrinking from that or anything else when duty (which with him included loyalty) demanded action.

The first characteristics of his temper were fixity in any resolution he might have taken, and a quality fatal in most of those who have to govern—an inability to intrigue. When he had no choice but to deceive he bungled the task clumsily, for it was quite opposed to his nature. He had inherited from his father and breathed in from all that surrounded him the prime duty of kingship—to govern all in the interests of all and as one superior to all, and especially to control the mighty and prevent the rich from usurping power over their inferiors.

His religious position was peculiar but intense. He was very Protestant, but regarded the Church of England in the form he had known as the perfect model of what Christ had intended His Church to be. His dislike of Catholicism had begun after the Spanish adventure, and it had turned into something like hatred. Protestant fanaticism he only disliked *politically*, as an interference with due authority; he was not averse to its *morals*. The first four years of his reign are strongly coloured by his deep, devoted, and almost adoring worship of the brilliant, energetic, wide-minded Buckingham,

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his senior ever at his side. A revolution in his character followed on the murder of that great friend; he thenceforward became a man determined and not easily influenced.

**The Revocation.** The most important act of Charles's life came at the very beginning of his reign. It was not spectacular, but it was the seed of his tragedy. It is called the Scottish Revocation.

The whole new position of the landed classes in both kingdoms was founded upon the confiscation of religious endowments, which had been proceeding steadily until within half a lifetime of Charles's accession, accompanied also by a looting of the royal capital endowment—forests, demesne land, etc. By the custom of Scotland the King could at the opening of a new reign recall royal lands alienated during a minority, and Charles availed himself of this constitutional right. He did not take back anything like the enormous sums which had been looted since the beginning of John Knox's revolution by the landed class in Scotland, but only so much as might provide a decent living for the ministers of the established Protestant religion.

He did not at once put his resolution into practice, but he declared it, and that was enough; thenceforward the whole landed interest north of the border was suspicious of the King, and, in varying degrees, every man who stood to lose by the Revocation and others who thought that the principle might be extended were inclined to oppose the Crown. It was this which led step by step to the support of the religious revolt against the King, and then to a whole national revolt against him in Scotland. To meet this revolt he had to demand special grants in England. In spite of a long and successful period of quiet government free from interference by the rich in England, he was compelled, greatly against his will, to summon a final Parliament, which immediately pressed on to a further usurpation of power, and raised the Great Rebellion. That Rebellion would not have succeeded but for the fact that the English Parliamentarians in revolt obtained the help of a Scottish army; hence their victory, and as a consequence of their victory the killing of Charles. With him the principle of monarchy in England was struck, and the substitution of aristocracy for it began—that is, government by a wealthy upper class, which, until quite recently, was the special mark of modern England.

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**The French Marriage.** There was no time to conclude the French marriage before the old King's death; but it was concluded by proxy within two months, and Buckingham went over to the French court in connection with it. Here he committed the imprudence of indulging in a violent love affair with Anne, the Queen of France, whom her husband had neglected. This was discovered, and brought an enmity between the two courts, which was increased by the King of England's active dislike of Catholic character and practice. When the young Queen came over she brought a retinue of her own servants and priests, guaranteed by treaty, and Charles before his father's death had (with his father) secretly promised toleration for Catholicism in England. The presence of the Mass in his own palace, however, and of all these foreigners about him, exasperated him; he broke his marriage treaty and pledged word by turning out the great bulk of the Queen's servants. The thing was done violently and abruptly, and increased the quarrel with the court of France. Charles had already inherited a war with Spain, and he was thus at the beginning of his reign drifting into a war with France.

**The Three Parliaments.** Within the first four years of Charles's accession three Parliaments were summoned; the first that which necessarily had to be summoned to meet a new King; the two next under an imperative necessity for obtaining the large and exceptional sums of money as special grants without which it was impossible to carry on. The royal revenue continued to fall, because the value of money was changing. The Crown got its revenue mainly in *customary* payments, so much land paid so many pounds. But the pound purchased less and less as time went on, and the Crown had to pay more and more for labour and materials, though its income was fixed. Moreover, the cost of things necessary to the state necessarily rose continually, because all modern things—including a larger and more expensive type of fighting ship, more expensive armaments of all kinds by land, etc.—were then rapidly developing. Now, Parliament, being a committee of the landed gentry and great merchants, was bound to continue its efforts at usurping power, which had begun in the old King's reign. These efforts would now be all the bolder because they had to deal with a young and inexperienced monarch, and because the tradition of kingship,

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which was still so very strong when James had come to the English throne twenty-two years before, had continued to give *him* a personal weight which his young son necessarily lacked. Moreover, in the interval the Crown had got still poorer and the wealthy classes in the nation still richer, for trade was continuously increasing.

**The First Parliament.** Charles's first Parliament was that always called to confirm and receive a new reign. And even in this early moment a revolutionary demand appears.

Something like half the King's regular revenue came from the customs, 'tonnage and poundage' and other sums levied at the ports, especially on imports, but on some exports too. These had belonged as a matter of course to the Government uninterruptedly for two centuries (that is, ever since they had come to be of any importance), and at the beginning of every reign, also as a matter of course, the right to continue was passed, by way of form, in the first Parliament. Now, for the first time, the revolutionary demand appeared that the Commons should refuse to pass the customs. They knew that Charles was in a dilemma about religion, because, with all his desire to keep down Catholicism, he had promised toleration secretly to his brother-in-law, the King of France, and yet had to repudiate that promise publicly in England. Therefore to strengthen their position those who were beginning the revolutionary demands in Parliament asked at the same time for the blood of a number of Catholic priests. They were not only manœuvring; they were also moved by fear, for (as one of their most prominent men had recently put it) "half the population might soon be Catholic." This was an exaggeration in 1625, but the Catholic-inclined minority was still very large: perhaps a third. The priests whose execution was demanded had been condemned for saying Mass, and Charles had used his royal power of pardon. He was asked, in spite of this, to have the men put to death. He refused, and as the rich men in Parliament would not give him any grant at all unless he bent to their will he dissolved their assembly on August 12, 1625.

**The Second Parliament.** In prosecution of the war with Spain an expedition was sent once more against Cadiz. It failed, largely through the incompetence of the Earl of Essex, a dull, sour, weak, and neutral man, the son of that Essex who had gained so brilliant a victory in the same place a generation

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before. It was imperatively necessary for the sake of money to summon yet another Parliament, and the revolutionary movement began again. This time the King was attacked through his close friend and guide, Buckingham. Buckingham was impeached (he had himself made the error of reviving impeachment, a medieval custom long forgotten and consisting in the prosecution of a man by the House of Commons before the tribunal of the House of Lords, who might condemn him to any penalty, including death<sup>1</sup>). To destroy Buckingham would have been a very heavy blow at the strength and prestige of the King. There were many in the Parliament who were active towards that end, notably Pym, the best organizer among them; but of a special value to the plan was the eloquence of Elliot, a very wealthy Cornish squire who had been a friend of Buckingham's in youth and to whom Buckingham had given a lucrative post in the West of England. Elliot was, like many orators, very touchy. He had been caught in doubtful money transactions, rendered the worse by the use he had made of public office for the purpose of enriching himself; he had been imprisoned and tried, and Buckingham had had him released; but Elliot thought that not enough had been done for him by his old friend, and he brooded. And he had further grievances—that he had not been given the great place he had hoped for in the marriage festivities, nor been called to Buckingham's side. He thus worked himself up into a mood of violent enmity against his benefactor. During the impeachment of Buckingham no one was more virulent than Elliot.

Before Parliament was dissolved the wealthy leaders of the revolution had gone so far as to suggest that Buckingham had poisoned his poor old master, James I, and even that Charles himself had taken part in the murder of his father. Buckingham completely cleared himself in a very able and moderate speech, in which he took each point of the accusation against him separately and examined it closely. This second Parliament was dissolved on June 15, 1626, having sat just over four months. The King urged the Commons to return to reason,

<sup>1</sup> The so-called impeachment of Bacon in the last reign was not a true impeachment in form; the revival of this dangerous custom dates from Buckingham's own plan to impeach Middlesex, the chief of those who still desired the Spanish marriage after he had broken it off

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but the reply of those who were managing the revolt was a Remonstrance, in which they claimed a sort of new partnership in government with the King, and demanded the final dismissal of his great minister.

**The La Rochelle Expedition, the Ile de Ré, and the Third Parliament.** I have said that Buckingham's chief claim to his great position in English history is his having initiated the policy of a powerful navy. He was prepared for a naval expedition which would have raised both the power and the prestige of England. France had then no fleet comparable to that of Charles, thanks to Buckingham; and had he made England the unquestioned power in the northern seas, as he came so near to doing, alliance with her on the conclusion of peace would have been eagerly sought by France against Spain or Spain against France. To conclude the war with France it was determined to relieve the Protestant town of La Rochelle, which the French King and his minister Richelieu proposed to reduce to obedience by siege. Buckingham sailed in command of the expedition for that port, which stands in the midst of the Atlantic coast of France; he had a large body of well-armed transports and some 8000 men, with a sufficient body of gunners and artillery. With great judgment he did not attack on the mainland, but, as his fleet was supreme, while the French had inexhaustible land forces, he proceeded to relieve the pressure upon La Rochelle by attacking the island of Ré,<sup>1</sup> commanding the entry to the harbour.

Buckingham would have succeeded against any other man than Richelieu. Although the French had no fleet to speak of, Richelieu's amazing energy and power of work, memory, and co-ordination managed to get a convoy of supply-boats into the harbour of the capital of the island of Ré, Saint-Martin, just as it was at the last gasp of starvation; on that account the expedition failed, and Buckingham returned with his defeated force, which had suffered in the operations, and most heavily in the difficult evacuation of the island and the embarkation of his troops. Had Buckingham succeeded he would once again have become the popular hero, but this second failure, following on Cadiz, strongly reinforced his enemies in the House of Commons, who thirsted for his blood because he stood for the kingly power. It was in the summer and autumn of 1627 that

<sup>1</sup> The old spelling, still generally used in our histories, is 'Rhé.'

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the La Rochelle expedition had failed, and once more, since the throw had gone against the players and the expense had been high, with no corresponding gains, it was necessary to call yet a third Parliament to grant aid. It was summoned to meet on March 17, 1628.

**The Petition of Right.** But meanwhile an omen had appeared: the lawyers had shown that their increasing sympathy with their own class, the gentry, might make them the allies of the latter against the King. When, in order to carry on while waiting the special grants from the new Parliament, the Crown had raised certain of the customs, the judges on an appeal had given their decision against the Government. When the third Parliament met it took up with more violence than ever its prosecution of Buckingham, and at the same time the leaders and organizers of the squires in the House of Commons increased in fervour against the King. They drew up that capital document of the whole revolutionary movement known as the Petition of Right. Its two main points were designed to cripple the power of Government. The first was that the King might no longer hold a man prisoner while he was investigating a case, or secure him if he were preparing rebellion; he could not imprison him without referring the case to the lawyers. The second point was a statement that property in goods and land was absolute and free from taxation by the Government. The owners could, if they chose, grant the King help, of course; but he could not *take* it. This destroyed the power of taxation, without which no Government can carry on. The revolutionaries did not do this with the object of destroying such power of government for ever; if the Petition of Right had done that it would have destroyed the state; it was only advanced with the immediate object of forcing a transfer of power from the King to the wealthier classes which formed the House of Commons.

There was wide popular support for the second point. Something like half England was then composed of small yeomen in the villages and small freeholders in towns, owners of shops, and craftsmen, all of whom had to pay taxes imposed by the King: anything which savoured of relief had great popular backing at this moment. But the whole regular revenue of the King, including customs, still came in to the Crown, for on that there could be no question; the regular revenue was a

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thing which flowed in as a matter of course—but aids and grants were something quite separate and admittedly voluntary; only the trouble was that this regular revenue was no longer nearly sufficient to carry on the work of Government.

The King was bound to hesitate before assenting to so violent a new measure as this Petition of Right; no Government can permanently abandon its power to govern, and these demands (especially the clauses on the right of arrest and imprisonment) would have amounted to that. However, the necessity for saving Buckingham was great and urgent; the pack were close upon him. So Charles assented to the Petition of Right as a Bill, but he gave only a general assent, instead of using the consecrated formula in French, "*Que Droit soit fait comme est désiré*," which turns a Bill into a law. This general consent was thought too vague; there was an uproar against it, and Charles yielded on the tacit understanding that the attack on Buckingham should cease. He signed the Bill in the accepted form which made it law without question.

**Murder of Buckingham.** The revolutionary leaders renewed their old opposition—they produced yet another Remonstrance denouncing the Duke, and they went a step farther in the revolutionary path by claiming that the Petition of Right forbade the King to levy the customs. That the statement was a falsehood is immaterial; the point is that it was not intended to be true, but to force the King's hand, and it was somehow managed that one of the Duke's hangers-on, a physician called Lamb, should be murdered. Parliament was adjourned (not dissolved) on June 26 until the following January, and placards appeared in the streets threatening Buckingham with death. On August 23, as Buckingham was preparing to start from Portsmouth, where another expedition was being fitted out, he was stabbed to death by one Felton, a discontented officer. Who inspired Felton, or whether he merely caught the prevailing excitement, we do not know.

**The Change in the King.** The shock of Buckingham's murder produced a great change in Charles. It suddenly matured him. His silent and reserved character had always nourished a strong sense of duty, which in a king means the duty of ruling for the advantage not of a class but of all. Hitherto he had relied wholly upon Buckingham. He had been led by him, and absorbed in the superior age, energy, and

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talent of the leader. His sudden disappearance, even in natural fashion, would have been a sufficient shock to make the King other than what he had been; coming as it did by assassination—and virtually at the hands of the men who had so violently attacked the monarchy—it made the situation henceforward quite definite. Either Charles or the wealthy revolutionaries in Parliament must go; and Charles was determined now that it should not be himself, but they.

He had promised to summon the prorogued Parliament again at the beginning of the next year, and though it contained those who were responsible for Buckingham's blood and for the accusations against himself (that he had been party to his father's murder), he kept his word. He had reissued printed copies of the Petition of Right, signed with the first *general* formula of assent, and prepared other copies with the stricter formula, in order that they might be compared. But he had returned to the general formula because the Parliament had broken the implied understanding about Buckingham. Parliament met in February 1629, and on March 2 Elliot excelled himself in fury and violence. When the Speaker rose to say that he had had orders for the adjournment of the House he was called upon to put a vote remonstrating against the collection of the customs. The Speaker refused to do so, because the House had been duly and legally ordered to adjourn by the King. The revolutionaries then used the first act of violence. The Speaker was held down in his chair by Holles, a young aristocrat and familiar at court, and by Valentine. A great number of members were ready to draw their swords in defence of the King, others to draw theirs in defence of the revolution; and even at this stage the new alliance between the political revolt and the intense Puritan feeling which was later to give it driving-power was brought in, and with a resolution declaring that any merchant who paid custom should be held a traitor it was also declared that anyone seeking to bring in Popery should be judged worthy of death.

The phrase was extravagant and ridiculous, for no one in authority was other than the strong enemy of Catholicism, but the very excess of the words showed how innate was now the alliance between the political revolutionaries and the large faction of the Puritans, upon whose zeal they depended for support in their attack on the monarchy. On the next day

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Charles dissolved the Parliament. He imprisoned those who had most offended, and particularly Holles, Valentine, and Elliot, but offered them liberty on condition of good behaviour. Some accepted—but among those who stood out and chose imprisonment in the Tower was Elliot himself. Imprisonment didn't mean what it means now. He had all he could want, saw friends, wrote, and did business; but the lack of exercise told on him. He fell into a consumption and died in the Tower nearly four years later, not before having seen to it that his large fortune should be transferred to his sons, and thereby be safe from confiscation.

**The Organization of Revenue.** The Government was now free for the moment of the revolutionaries, and there was no danger of revolution so long as Parliament was kept from meeting, for the feeling had not sufficient strength in the country to act spontaneously; it was only when the leaders of the wealthier classes could act through their organized committee, the House of Commons, that there was danger of active rebellion breaking out. But mere relief from worry did not provide money. The regular revenue of the Government, on which it was supposed to carry on, had fallen by this time to be not more than half the necessary expenses; for the customary rents of the Crown, the products of the forests, wardships, fines, etc., all the bulk of the regular revenue, had continued to sink heavily since the past century with the change in the value of money, while the things for which the Crown had to pay had become dearer and dearer for the same reason. How was the gap to be filled?

Three things were necessary: first, to have peace abroad; secondly, to insist upon strict economy in administration—and that meant loyal service and strong control; thirdly, to obtain new sources of revenue.

As to the first, Charles's whole policy was now changing to an avoidance of war in any form; as to the second, he had the good fortune to have at his side excellent administrators. The chief of these was Thomas Wentworth, an immensely wealthy landowner from Yorkshire, who played a great part in the resistance his class had offered to the Crown in Parliament—he may be said to have been at one moment their leader. Almost up to the moment of the Petition of Right this determined, energetic man, of the highest capacities, much the

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greatest statesman of his day, had been one of the revolutionaries; but he had offered his services to the King before the end of the summer session, and therefore well before Buckingham's murder. To the other rich squires who had been working with him the act seemed one of treason. His motive for it was a growing disgust with anarchy. The increasing ascendancy of the rhetorician Elliot also offended him; but what he feared was the breakdown of all government from the new revolutionary spirit which had grown to such heights, especially now that it was allied with the zealous Puritan faction. For Wentworth was above all a man determined upon order. He could not foresee, and no one at that time foresaw, how, after a long period of turmoil, what at first seemed like a confused rebellion would result in that aristocratic government which less than a lifetime later was to take the place of the old monarchy. No one then understood what we now see so well—that England governed by the gentry in the place of a king representing the whole nation, and by a gentry which included the lawyers' guild, would increase in strength and wealth, and become at last the most orderly and united of the European states.

Charles also was to be well served by a man of very different physique from Wentworth, but of much the same ideas in government—Laud, a scholar and a strict Churchman, whose religion, often represented as ritualistic, was rather concerned with unity within a Church of England, and above all in the state. In personal sympathies he was opposed to Puritanism, as the majority of highly cultured men naturally were; yet his readiness to attack Puritanism did not lie in his personal feelings, but in his conviction that it made for anarchy. He had first been put forward long ago by Buckingham; he was a man much older than the King and older than Wentworth, small, active, highly intelligent, industrious, and as determined as any of them. He was not yet the head of the Church in England, the Primacy being still held by Abbot, who was of Puritan sympathies; but he was destined for the highest position when it should fall vacant, and he was already, by 1628, the chief ecclesiastical adviser of the Crown, having been promoted from the bishopric of St Davids to that of London.

There was also, what the King greatly needed in such a crisis, a lawyer of high ability, one who (like Wentworth) had been strong in opposition, and now joined the forces of the

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Government: his name was Noy. His motive in joining the King was not either as mixed or as noble as Wentworth's; it was the lawyer's professional motive of earning money. Charles was strict for legality, and he found the ingenuity of Noy invaluable in the plan which was now being made for increasing revenue. Above all, the Government must not have it said that it was itself revolutionary. Charles was determined to rely upon precedent, and upon the admitted tradition of his constitutional right. But in thus keeping to the letter of the law, as he did throughout, he was compelled to what were in practice great innovations.

### **The New Methods of adding to the Regular Revenue.**

The Government—that is, the King—had by all constitutional precedent certain rights which, if it chose to insist upon them fully, could largely increase the regular revenue, and with strict economy save the Crown from having to go hat in hand again to the property-owners for voluntary grants. It had the right to grant patents and monopolies, as all Governments have. Just as to-day we hand over many great departments by private charter (forms of transport, wireless, etc.), so the Government could then organize the supply of this or that under corporations or individuals, which had the right to limited profit on condition of paying money to the state. It could rely upon the customs, which were increasing rapidly in value, especially under the advance in the volume of trade which quiet government ensured; and it could add to these if necessary. It could also, when in need of capital sums, have regular recourse to that dangerous remedy, the sale of portions of the state endowment—that is, state lands. It could insist upon the full execution of 'fines' which were due to it legally for misdemeanours, for the livery of estates, etc., and upon money penalties from such wealthy Catholics as were willing to make heavy sacrifice by refusing to follow the established Government Liturgy in the parish churches. With such Catholics it could compound at will, and did so for great sums. There was yet another source of revenue available. The proper endowment of the Crown included the great lands outside the manorial system, known as 'forests,' which did not mean woodlands only, but much cultivated land, rents for buildings, rights of hunting and fishing, minerals, and the rest. These 'forests' had been encroached upon at large for a very long time past, especially

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during the reign of the boy-King Edward and the women who succeeded him; the great landed families had filched from the royal revenue here in every direction. Charles proposed to recover the old boundaries as they had been before the spoliation took place, and to insist upon the rights of the Crown. It would have been a most fruitful policy could it have been fully carried out, for it would have put many great woods and nearly all wild land and mountains into the hands of the community, as they commonly are in other European countries, but it violently increased the opposition of the landed interest, and therefore it was *not* fully carried out.

Armed with these resources, the Government could just barely fill the gap between expenditure and revenue so long as there was peace. For four years the effort worked well enough, and might have worked indefinitely, but for two things—first, a misapprehension of Scottish affairs, and a consequent piece of mistaken policy therein; secondly, the necessity of building a fleet to meet the new sea-power of France.

**The Scottish Trouble.** In 1633 the King went northward into Scotland, where he was well received, representing as he did the Scottish dynasty and even speaking in a Scottish manner. He took with him Laud, whose desire for unity throughout the realm in the matter of religion was the cause of what followed. The Scottish people in the towns and Lowlands—the great majority of them—were by this time strongly Calvinist, and the Church (or Kirk, as they called it) was among them organized in Calvinistic fashion. The Scottish bishoprics had been preserved, but the power of the bishops was small and that of the Presbytery dominated all. Some believed—but there is no means of testing the value of their judgment—that if the comparatively moderate changes which had been suggested in that year (1633) had been applied at once the Scottish people would have accepted them. It is doubtful, for, though the power of the bishops was only slightly increased, it was unpopular, and, what was much more important, all the Scottish landed interest was awake to the peril threatening them from the original Revocation announced at the beginning of the reign. Anyhow, the new Service Book was not introduced for four years, and in the interval opposition rapidly grew in Scotland. Charles, after returning to England in that summer of 1633, raised Laud to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, vacant through the

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decease of the Puritan sympathizer Abbot, and the policy of religious conformity could henceforward be rigorously pursued in England.

**Ship Money.** The next cause of trouble was financial. The idea of English supremacy at sea which Buckingham had initiated had hitherto hardly been threatened. Spain was in decay; her Dutch provinces had achieved virtual independence, she no longer counted in northern waters. The French power, which had been the immediate menace, had had no fleet; but the great French minister Richelieu (by far the greatest political genius of his time) had taken over the French admiralty and was now building a great fleet. It was imperative to meet this menace by the building of a corresponding fleet for England. But the money for it could not be found out of the regular revenue. To ask for it as a voluntary grant would have been fatal; such a grant would not have been given, and the summoning of Parliament would at once have been the signal for the renewal of their revolutionary effort by the wealthier classes.

Noy then elaborated a certain plan. The Government had always had the right to demand ships from the maritime towns and provinces for the defence of the realm; writs were issued to these for a levy in due form against which no complaint could be made; but Noy extended the principle in a fashion which, though it was later declared legal by the judges, was in effect so novel as to have about it just that aggressive quality whereof the King was so anxious to avoid the reproach. Since in the circumstances of the day, with the development of the modern state, the whole country was equally interested in naval defence, Noy urged that, in justice, all should now contribute to the new fleet, and not leave the whole burden to be borne by the maritime towns and provinces, for whose taxing in this fashion there was ample and open precedent.

Noy died before the completion of his plan, but it was adopted and carried out, and the second writ for Ship Money, as it was called, was issued to all owners of assessed property whether in the maritime counties or inland. Under such a scheme the sum raised would be sufficient to build and equip a fleet at least equal to, and even, it was hoped, superior to, that which the French were preparing.

This new levy was not burdensome (it was only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,

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sixpence in the pound), but—we must repeat and insist upon the point—it was novel. It affected not only the great men, but, being a flat rate, was disproportionately burdensome upon the small men. We must remember that England was still half composed of a free peasantry, freeholders whether under quit-rents or without rents at all, yeomen owning or paying a small unalterable rent for land which they had inherited and could leave to their descendants; such a man owning, say, a hundred acres was asked to pay a sum equivalent to £2 10s. of modern money. And the much more numerous smaller men who maintained themselves on a smallholding of twenty or thirty acres had to pay in proportion.

The impost was protested against by a typical revolutionary of the day, a very wealthy landowner with his principal seat in Buckinghamshire, John Hampden.<sup>1</sup> He took the case to the courts, and the way in which the lawyers were gradually swinging round against the Crown then became apparent—for there was only the smallest possible majority—seven to five—among the judges in favour of the Government's claim. Those judges who dissented relied upon various reasons, some of them merely technical, but the lack of unanimity was striking. The long-drawn-out debates also had great publicity and great effect, and Hampden, though condemned to pay (he had taken one small assessment of his as a test), had won a moral victory, and with him all the landed class of England, including those who had been and still were most energetic in attempting to supplant the government of the Crown by a government of their own class. This case was not finally decided until 1637.

**The Scottish Rebellion.** Meanwhile religious trouble in Scotland had come to a head. The new Service Book, which might have been introduced in 1633, was ordered to be read in this year, 1637. The first service under it was held on July 23, 1637, in St Giles's Church, in Edinburgh (which had been turned into a cathedral), and it created a riot in which the bishop had to fly for his life.

The remarkable talent of the Scots for organization appeared; all classes combined to form a sort of provisional Government, and, recalling a term and an act of the earlier Reformation, they drew up a Covenant between themselves and the Lord God,

<sup>1</sup> He had about what we should call to-day £40,000 a year; and that in a much poorer England than ours and one only a tenth of the size.

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binding both parties in due legal form. This document was signed by thousands with the greatest enthusiasm in Edinburgh, and then all over the country, except in the mountains; the Covenanters, as they were now called, demanded the abolition of the new Service, a free Parliament, and a General Assembly of their Kirk. The claims were granted to gain time, for the Crown had no forces ready with which to oppose them. In the same year, 1638, by which time Hampden's moral success over Ship Money had become common property, the General Assembly virtually took over the government of Scotland, and prepared for war. They raised a large force, for which there was an ample supply of officers who had been trained in foreign warfare with a soldiery experienced in foreign war also (for Scotsmen had gone out as mercenaries in considerable numbers to fight in the religious wars on the Continent). At the head of their forces was Alexander Leslie, an excellent and experienced officer. The Covenanters appealed to Richelieu for help (a direct piece of treason), and Richelieu was only too glad to do what he could to weaken the rival power of England.

**Wentworth in Ireland.** Wentworth, who had been raised to the peerage under the title of Strafford, was now the directing force of the English Government. Charles had given him the control of the North of England, putting him at the head of the special council (the Council of the North) which had been created there after the northern Catholic rebellion against the Reformation, and which continued to have a special jurisdiction. He was next sent over to Ireland, where he governed with great firmness, making himself very unpopular with the English adventurers, who had been looting the country, but equally or more unpopular with the native landowners, most of whom were still Catholic. These had been promised toleration for their religion if they would grant money; they voted large sums of money with which Wentworth (Strafford) organized a small but excellent army, fully mobilized, of between 8000 and 9000 men and a numerous reserve. The promise of toleration was broken, and those Catholics who had been dispossessed of their lands under Elizabeth and James in various stages—that is, the great bulk of the Irish population in the north and on the eastern sea-coast—were especially exasperated.

**The Scottish War.** Wentworth came back from Ireland to give his advice on the Scottish crisis. The English Govern-

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ment had gathered, in order to meet the now excellent army which the Scottish rebels had prepared, an army of its own; it was worth very little, being but an untrained militia, loosely organized under the landowners, many of whom were disaffected. The troops committed excesses, especially against the churches, where Laud had imposed uniformity of Liturgy—hateful to the Puritan faction; there were many cases of mutiny of a more general kind; the pressed men were reluctant to march, and the number even slightly instructed in the use of arms was insignificant. Strafford wisely advised the King that the army was not competent to meet the Scots, who were now all ready for invasion. The rendezvous for Charles's army was York; the Scots still hesitated to invade, and Charles at Berwick concluded a treaty named after that town, which was really no more than a truce. The Scots pretended to disband their army, but kept the cadres and had it all ready to reassemble at will, and they hesitated to give up the royal castles. Meanwhile a letter asking Richelieu for help was intercepted, and war became inevitable. ✓

War, of course, meant the necessity for very large sums of money, and there could be no such further extraordinary sums available save by a voluntary grant. Therefore what is known in history as the Short Parliament was summoned, and met in April 1640.

Charles had hoped that the national feeling of England against Scotland would count more than the revolutionary feeling, especially after this had been given eleven years in which to die down and when many of the original opposition had disappeared. But he was mistaken. The Parliament again began, under the leadership of Pym, to insist on the old claims; Charles offered to give up Ship Money, his now established right, as against a grant sufficient for the war, but the bargain was refused, and Parliament was dissolved after sitting a little less than three weeks (May 5, 1640).

Everything would now depend upon a sharp and immediate victory against the Scots, but Charles's army was in no condition for that, and at the first clash the Scotch showed against the vanguard of the English such great military superiority that the issue could not be doubtful were hostilities to be prolonged. After thus brushing aside the inadequate military resistance of England the Scotch occupied Northumberland and Durham,

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controlling the coalfields, which even at that day had begun to have some importance, and, what much more impressed the public imagination, levying huge subsidies from the English landowners. The large Catholic minority (and in the North it was perhaps more than a minority) they robbed at large, and even upon those who must have sympathized with Puritanism, and therefore in a great degree with the Calvinist Scotch, they levied large and continuous tribute. It was necessary to treat, and the English Government (that is, the King, who had already summoned a new Parliament in his overwhelming necessities) consented to leave the invaders in occupation of the North and to pay them £40,000 a month—which was at the rate of half the whole normal revenue of the Crown.

**The Long Parliament.** What was known in history as the Long Parliament met (after an abortive effort to consult a council of nobles instead) upon November 3, 1640. The revolutionary temper appeared in it even more strongly than it had in the Short Parliament, and that temper was organized under the genius of Pym, who had been tenaciously following the same policy for so many years. It is unfortunate that we know little about Pym. He was, as I have said, a hanger-on of the millionaire Russell family, and sat for their private borough of Tavistock, but he was much more. He had enriched himself since his first appearance as member for Tavistock seventeen years before. He was one of those men who delight in management and have supreme gifts for it; whether his convictions were as strong as his speech may be doubted, but of his desire to organize men and their actions and be a leader there can be no doubt; his great opportunity had now arrived. His years (he was fifty-six) added to the weight of his great reputation.

The breakdown of Charles's effort at national unity completely transformed the strength of the incipient revolution; the intolerable expense and shame of the failure in the North lit the flame—a week after the Parliament had met Pym caused the door of the House of Commons to be locked, and with great pomp introduced an impeachment of Strafford. That great statesman came down to the House, but the feeling against him was too strong—the rebellion was fairly alight. By a second revolutionary act Strafford was arrested on the authority of the House alone and kept a prisoner.

**The Trial and Death of Strafford.** Towards the end of

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March 1641 the trial began—it turned into a duel between the traditional Government of England and the new usurping claims of what was to become so soon a governing class of wealthy men. Strafford defended himself with such ability that at last the verdict seemed to be in doubt, though the House of Lords, who were the judges in an impeachment, came from the same social class as the Commons. They were hesitating to convict, when Pym brought out a trump card which he took care to play through others. He got certain members to supplement the impeachment by a proposed Act of Attainder, under which tyrannical instrument (used in Cromwell's religious terror a hundred years before) there was no need for evidence and there was no trial—the victim was simply condemned to death by an Act of Parliament. The move was based upon something which Pym and his party called in as new evidence. Harry Vane was secretary to the Council, and his son, who was an extreme revolutionary (acting presumably in collusion with his father, for the father himself prepared to betray the King), came forward with a paper which he said was the copy of notes which he had taken from his father's desk. In these notes Strafford was affirmed to have said in the privacy of the Council that the army in Ireland would be serviceable "to reduce this kingdom."

The words, if ever they had been used—and no one present could recollect them—had been used, of course, with regard to Scotland, but the hypocritical pretence was advanced that they were intended to apply to England. Pym's plan of merely putting a man to death without trial was so odious that most men were too shocked or too alarmed to act. Those who voted for the deed in the Commons were far less than half—barely more than two hundred out of the whole assembly—and fifty-nine of those present had the courage to give a negative vote. But Pym was working through the City of London, the financial centre which had offered the strongest resistance to the new taxation; he had organized the affair thoroughly; there was a large mob ready to insist on Strafford's death, and the Puritan preachers were clamouring for it in the pulpits.

It lay now with the Peers to decide whether they would vote for the Bill; and even if they did the King must assent to it before the actual killing could take place. So odious was the task demanded of them that of all the peers not one in three came to the Upper House on Saturday, May 8, when the vote

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had to be taken. Of those present, only forty-five in number, nineteen voted for Strafford's life, twenty-six—about one-sixth of the peerage—for his death. It was by this majority of seven in such an assembly that Strafford was condemned.

On the Sunday, May 9, Charles debated in an agony between the two antagonistic forms of duty presented to him. Pym's organized mob outside the palace were howling for Strafford's blood, with the money power of the City behind them. Charles's wife, his family, his crown, were no longer safe. On the other hand, he had pledged himself to save his loyal and devoted servant, though Strafford had offered himself as a sacrifice. The man who turned the scale was Williams, the Archbishop of York; the King, in the division of opinion about him, turned to him as the highest spiritual authority available—for Laud had already been put in prison by the revolutionaries. Williams (putting it on the highest moral ground—and he also later betrayed the royal cause) told Charles that it was his paramount duty to save the nation from civil war. The Royal Assent was given, and Strafford was put to death before an immense concourse of people on the morning of the next Wednesday, May 12, 1641.

**The Irish Insurrection.** A secret effort was made to save the position of the King by the use of such an armed force as might support him; it failed, and its failure did but the more strengthen Pym's hands. And shortly afterwards, in the autumn, came a greater and largely successful insurrection of the Irish people for the recovery of their own lands of which they had been despoiled, and for the recovery also of their religion. The descendants of the original planters, who had been given by force the land of the Irish in the north, and those of the more recent plantations, were driven out. Acts of great cruelty took place against the victims as they flocked to seek refuge, despoiled of all they had, and sometimes stripped and driven naked into the neighbouring towns. How many fell in this insurrection has been a matter of dispute—2000 may be too low an estimate, 5000 too high. But the story of a successful Catholic rising grew when it reached England to enormous proportions, and men would have it, in their fury, that hundreds of thousands had been put to death. The insurrection failed to take Dublin, but in the greater part of Ireland it re-established the rights of the original owners to their land, and especially to their national religion.

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**The Five Members.** One last attempt was made by the King to check by force the organization of the civil war which threatened. He proposed to arrest as traitors five named leaders of the revolution in the Commons and in the Upper House, including Kimbolton, later to be Manchester. The King came down with his guard in some force to make the arrest in person, upon January 3, 1642, but the French Ambassador and a woman who was probably Pym's mistress, and certainly the Queen's friend, Lady Carlisle, had betrayed the plan, and the accused men were gone. They had fled to the protection of the wealthy merchants in the City.

**The Last of the Peace.** Henceforward there was no chance of avoiding armed conflict. Indeed, the King, upon seeing it, had already signed away one power of the Crown after another, knowing that they could only be recovered and supported by armed strength. He sent away his wife for safety to Holland, and left London himself a week after the affair of the Five Members, awaiting the first overt act of rebellion, which could not now be long delayed.

## THE GREAT REBELLION

**Succession of Events.** The Great Rebellion, which transformed the political arrangements of the English people as completely as the Reformation (of which it was the sequel) transformed their religion and character, falls into three periods.

(1) There is a first period of active, armed struggle, which lasts nearly two years, from the summer of 1642 to the spring and summer of 1644. It may be said to end with the decisive victory of Marston Moor gained by the rebels.

(2) The second period is that phase which you will find in most wars when, after the crisis has been reached and passed, as it was at Marston Moor, the victorious side proceeds to more and more complete success, until it has crushed its opponent. This period is also a matter of about two years, or rather less, from the summer of 1644 to the spring of 1646.

(3) The third period is one in which, although there were detached episodes of brief conflicts, the war is over, and the interest of the time is the compassing of the King's death by Oliver Cromwell, who had for some time past been the chief man upon the conquering side. This third period lasts two



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years and a half, from the surrender of the King to the Scottish armies in May 1646 to his execution at Whitehall in January 1649.

This third phase falls into three minor subdivisions: (*a*) a short one of less than eight months, during which Charles is the prisoner of the Scotch; (*b*) a second, still shorter one during which Charles is the prisoner of the Parliament, who had bought him from the Scotch (it only lasts four months, from early February 1647 to early June 1647); (*c*) the third, a period of eighteen months or rather more, from the time that the Army—that is, Cromwell—took the King by force out of the hands of the Parliament, in June 1647, until they killed him on January 30, 1649.

**The Forces Compared.** From the outset the Rebellion had every advantage, and it seemed impossible that it should fail, though as a fact it nearly did so at one moment through incompetent management.

There is a parallel here, to compare small things with great, between the Great Rebellion and the recent European War. In the latter the Prussian Alliance, generally called the Central Powers, had everything in their favour, and only lost their opportunities through incompetence. There was, of course, this difference—that the Rebellion rallied after its first faults and gained the victory, whereas the Prussian Alliance in the European War made so many blunders that it was at last defeated.

The advantages of the rebels on the material side are manifest.

(1) They had taken possession of London, where the bulk of the mobilized and immediately usable wealth of England was concentrated, where three-quarters of the customs were levied, and where by far the largest mass of urban population in England was assembled, with a partly trained militia of its own, forming, as society then was, a considerable army. London has always decided the fate of England: but for London the new religion could not have been imposed upon the English under the Cecils; and it was London now which mainly decided the Civil War. The possession of London not only meant control of its immediate and very large uninterrupted Customs revenue, nor only a considerable recruiting field; it also meant the control of the whole sweep of south-eastern England from the Wash to Southampton Water, at that time the wealthiest district of the whole island.

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(2) With money there went recruiting power. The Rebellion could always command larger armies than could the King, and though the armies of that day were not fully conscript (though largely composed of pressed men, compelled to serve against their will), yet they were not as small as might be thought from the comparatively restricted numbers engaged in, at any rate, the earlier battles. For the Civil War raised faction fights all over England, and required garrisons in a great number of detached towns, castles, and even private houses. The opposing forces put into the field, at their greatest effort, more than 120,000 men—the equivalent to-day, compared with our population, of a million. Even so, however, much the greater part of the manhood of the nation was not engaged, most of it being agricultural, and not to be spared. As the war proceeded, and the Rebellion gained more and more territory, its power of recruitment increased, while the King's declined. Moreover, the King had no money to pay for the equipment and maintenance of forces, save what he could get from unorganized levies and the generous gifts of his richer followers.

(3) The Rebellion had a great advantage in artillery. This was also part of its advantage in money. Artillery played little part in the pitched battles, but the heavy guns were all-important in the later part of the war for the capture of strongholds, castles, and walled towns. Long ago on the Continent artillery had mastered the old stone defences, which had had to be reinforced by earthwork; but in England the old stone walls remained intact round most of the towns, and the castles were not the ruins or private houses which they have now become, but forts organized for defence, and capable of keeping garrisons. The King never had a siege-train comparable to that of the Rebellion.

(4) The rebels held nearly all the ports. Only Chester and Newcastle were open to the King, while Plymouth, Fowey, Portsmouth, and everything round the coast up to and including Hull, were in the hands of his enemies.

(5) The rebel command also held the sea, for Percy, the Earl of Northumberland, who was Charles's admiral, had traitorously handed the ships over to one working with Charles's opponents. The fine fleet which Charles had built to withstand the French was thus lost to him. This fleet could not prevent *all* succour from reaching Charles from overseas—indeed, the Queen

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succeeded in evading it and bringing in artillery to help her husband—but it greatly hampered the King's provisionment.

(6) The commanders of the Rebellion were not hampered by a bad military tradition. They were able at the critical moment to make a clean sweep, and put the effective command into the hands of their most able men, and also in time to develop a well-disciplined permanent force. Charles, on the other hand, was handicapped by the necessity of relying upon the personal loyalty of a host of gentlemen whose claims to precedence he had to consider, whose power of enforcing discipline upon those who followed them differed greatly from one unit to another.

(7) On the moral side the advantage of the Rebellion was not so great, but was still considerable. Though the populace of an England then for much the greater part agricultural was mainly for the King, the sentiment was vague, and the taxpayers, including the great body of the freeholding peasantry, still remembered their grievances against the old Government.

On the other hand, Charles had one great asset: his claim was clear. He demanded no more than his constitutional authority, accepted by immemorial custom. He was England. He represented the nation, while the so-called Parliament represented nothing like the nation. Of the two Houses one, the Commons, was reduced to little more than half its former numbers, and even within this fraction were many who doubted the wisdom of active rebellion; while the other, the House of Lords, had ceased to exist, though the name 'Lords' was still given to a handful of men who remained at Westminster and in different degrees supported the Rebellion. These, of course, could not speak with traditional authority, and that fraction of the Commons which still called itself by the old name was composed mainly of members from the little towns who always formed four-fifths of the House; while the knights of the shire, who stood for the overwhelmingly larger rural population, were only one-fifth.

But, as against all this, was the great moral fact that the King was whole-heartedly supported by only a few. The remaining 'momentum' and weight of kingship was still great, but the squires who followed him had for the most part no intention of losing the advantages their class had recently won. A typical example is Lord Southampton, head of one of the new great millionaire Reformation families. He has left it on record that,

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though he thought it his duty to follow the King, he did so with a heavy heart. He had looted a great part of the New Forest, and the King had compelled him to disgorge. His case is typical, for he was only one among a great number who had acted in a similar fashion, reluctantly joining the King but not sincerely supporting him. Another case is that of the very rich Reformation family of Cromwell. The head of the family was on Charles's side when it came to positive rebellion, but his nephew, the famous Oliver, more truly represented the class and its tradition when he acted so zealously against the Crown.

### **The First Phase of the War : the Issue hangs Doubtful.**

It is not easy to fix on the exact moment when hostilities opened. One might take the first overt act of rebellion, when the Commons voted themselves free to command forces of their own, apart from the King's, long before fighting began; or one might take it from the first shot that was fired, a point not easy to determine, but one at any rate well on into 1642. The date most commonly taken as the point of departure, and probably the best, is April 23, when the King summoned Hotham, whom the Parliament had sent to command Hull, demanding admission to the royal magazine of arms and powder there. Hotham refused the King admission, and was declared a traitor. It was unfortunate for Charles that Hull was one of the two towns (the other being Berwick) which he had himself had fortified with the new earthworks in place of the old stone walls which artillery could destroy.

On August 22, 1642, the King set up his standard at Nottingham, and summoned the gentry within reach to join him. Even so he made overtures for peace, which the 'Parliament' rejected. The Earl of Essex, one of the very few lords who remained with the rebels, was named to command the army raised against the King, and had 20,000 men with him by September 10. Charles went west towards the Severn and the Welsh border, where he could get plenty of recruits. Essex also went west. Charles, having gathered a mobile force of 13,000 men, apart from detachments left for garrison work, marched south and east from the Severn valley for London. Essex followed with only 11,000, having had to leave nearly half his force in garrisons to hold points in the West which were opposed to him. The two forces were so close by October 22, a Saturday, that neither could afford to march in safety, but each had to accept battle.

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The action was joined immediately at the foot of Edge Hill, near Banbury, on Sunday, October 23, 1642. The incompetent Essex had so mishandled things that the almost equally incompetent Hampden, with all the artillery and two regiments, was a whole day's march behind. Numbers and material, therefore, heavily favoured the King; but the rebel cavalry was so well handled on the right that, in spite of a complete royal success against its left, where Prince Rupert, the King's nephew, the son of the Electress Palatine, led the charge, the rebel fortunes were restored, and the battle was a drawn one. In this successful cavalry action, supported by good infantry work as well, we find prominent Hampden's cousin, sprung like Hampden from one of the millionaire families, but himself of moderate wealth, being the son of a younger son. This man's name was Oliver Cromwell, who was then captain of a troop of horse.

After the battle of Edge Hill Charles went on to London, but his progress was very slow. He could have got there in a week, and he allowed three, garrisoning Oxford and Reading as he went. He probably knew that arrival in London would mean negotiation rather than any chance of successful fighting, for the town was far too large to be rushed. This delay gave Essex time to come round to London by the north. The large, half-trained militia of the capital was mobilized. After some desultory fighting and negotiation the King retired with his forces on Oxford, then a small walled town of about half a mile each way, henceforward to be his capital.

That winter of 1642 was taken up in earnest negotiations for peace. Many in the City were now becoming uneasy at the heavy expense of the war, and there was a plot against the Rebellion, in which some of the Commons themselves were involved, but it came to nothing, as did the negotiations for peace themselves, for the 'Parliament' was as determined to continue fighting as the King was anxious for peace.

We must understand how during all that ensues group fighting on a small scale was going on all over the place. But to follow the fortunes of the Civil War we must consider only the main actions and the key points.

In the next year, 1643, came a great event for the King, the capture of Bristol by Prince Rupert. This gave the King a most important seaport, the second seaport of the kingdom, and, to complete the line of the Severn and so hold the West altogether,

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he laid siege to Gloucester, which had a rebel garrison. The siege began on August 26, 1643. Essex marched from near London to relieve the town, and, though his progress was slow, he reached it in time, and the siege was raised on September 5. Meanwhile that which was to make all the difference to the Civil War was afoot: negotiations for getting the large and well-trained Scottish army to come in as allies of the Rebellion were going forward under the guidance of Pym, who died before all was concluded, but the fruit of whose labours was the appearance of 21,000 well-disciplined and well-armed Scotchmen crossing the border in the middle of the next January (1644). The Scotch, over and above the £30,000 a month as their price, had insisted on the English joining their Covenant with the Lord God before they would come in, and the rebel fraction of the House of Commons took the Covenant, as did the handful of Lords attached to them. Hitherto the Royalist forces had held all the North, with Newcastle for a port and York for a local capital. The Earl of Newcastle had only 8000 men with which to stop the invasion of the 21,000 Scots. He fell back before them, and was besieged in York by the combined forces of the Scots and of the English Rebellion.

With the summer Prince Rupert marched to the relief of York, and, though he was not so numerous as the besieging forces, these could not fight a battle on two fronts, so they fell back, on July 1, 1644. Next day Rupert and Newcastle took up a position just west of the city, on a heath called Marston Moor. The retreating Scots and rebel allies could now use the advantage of their superior numbers, as they were no longer cooped up between a relieving army and the besieged town. They turned to attack Rupert and Newcastle, who had but 18,000 men to their 25,000.

The movement was bungled; the allies arrived late on the field, and it was not thought that action could be joined that day, as there were only about two hours of light left; but the superior forces attacked, and were at once driven backward by the Royalist centre and left. On the right Prince Rupert commanded the King's cavalry, having opposite to him Cromwell, who had now risen to be lieutenant-general, commanding the Parliamentary force on its left wing, and enjoying the great superiority of numbers given him by the presence of Scottish cavalry behind him. The two bodies of horse charged and

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counter-charged. Cromwell's command was giving way, when his Scottish reserve joined in, after which Rupert's right wing of horse was first pushed back and then scattered. Everywhere else the Royalist forces had had it their own way and were moving forward against a defeated enemy. At that moment, towards the last of the daylight, the genius of Cromwell as a cavalry leader appeared. He used, not for the first time but on a large scale, his principle of the "interrupted and converted charge." Instead of pursuing the broken forces in front of him, he wheeled round to the right, against the exposed and undefended flank of the Royalist infantry, hitherto victorious, and rolled them up before they could change front and defend themselves. By dusk the thing was over. The Royalists had lost all their guns and baggage, great numbers of prisoners, a much larger number of wounded, and no less than 3000—one man in six—killed.

Marston Moor was thus a decisive victory. It made Cromwell by far the most famous figure on the side of the Rebellion, and guaranteed his competence to continue it with success. The whole of the North was lost at one blow to the Royalist cause, both as a recruiting field and as a source of revenue. This Tuesday, July 2, 1644, was the true turning-point of the war, after which the issue was no longer doubtful.

**The Mopping Up.** Immediately after Marston Moor Charles got a success in the extreme south-west above Fowey harbour, which proved of little profit, but unduly raised men's spirits on the Royalist side. The absurd Essex, with about 10,000 men, had got himself surrounded by a superior Royalist force, with the King in person commanding. He himself escaped by boat to Plymouth. His unfortunate infantry surrendered, but the bulk of his horse, 2000 sabres, got away in the darkness. This success of the King's was called after the little town of Lostwithiel, near Fowey harbour, in Cornwall. Charles was compelled to release his prisoners from lack of provisions for feeding them.

The effect of Essex's failure was considerable, in that it persuaded the leaders of the Rebellion to overhaul their whole military system. There was produced for the Rebellion in the late winter and the spring of the next year, 1645, a permanent, well-disciplined, and properly organized force, such as neither side had yet possessed, known as the New Model. It was on paper to be of 22,000 men, exactly ordered in equal units by regiments

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under colonels, and, on paper also, to be paid considerable wages. A strict discipline was also organized, with a strong code of penalties, and the Rebellion had at last an effective weapon in its hands. The perpetual desertions would now be gradually checked, and, what was most important, there would be a growing unity of command. The inspiration behind this idea was undoubtedly Cromwell's, though many who had been taught by the experience of war were supporting the policy.

The ordinance for this New Model was finally voted in the first days of April 1645, and at the same time an idea already mooted but only now brought into practice, called the Self-denying Ordinance, was passed. In the first plan all members of the truncated Commons and the fragmentary Lords were forbidden to exercise command again. In the final form this prohibition was not openly repeated, though it was understood, and all members of either House so commanding had to lay down their commands. But a strange anomaly appeared, which the apologists for Cromwell have done what they could to explain, but which remains clear enough in character.

*An exception was made for Cromwell alone.* He kept his seat and influence at Westminster, and was at the same time the principal man in the Army, though technically only second in command, his new chief being Fairfax. It was an innovation not to have nobles at the head of the forces, but in future both Essex and Manchester, who had commanded at Marston Moor very badly, were laid aside. The general put at the head of the New Model army (but not as yet commanding the much more numerous remainder of the forces) was Fairfax, a courteous, popular, and fairly capable man, typical of the rebel leaders, being an immensely wealthy landowner from the North. In character and military ability he could not for a moment stand up to Cromwell, even when later he was in nominal command of the whole armed forces of the now triumphant Rebellion.

Fairfax had orders to besiege Oxford, the King's capital. But on Charles marching first north, then east, and taking Leicester by storm, at the end of May 1645, the idea of carrying Oxford for the Rebellion was abandoned. Fairfax marched immediately after the King, and his large, well-ordered, and well-equipped army was almost in touch with the far less efficient, ill-recruited Royalist remnant within a fortnight. On June 13, 1645, Cromwell had joined him near the village of Naseby, which lies a day's march

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south of Leicester, the King's command being about four miles to the north.

Next morning the royal army, though little more than 7000 men, took the initiative, and attacked the rebel line of just on twice their own numbers (more than 13,500). It is probable they did not know how great the disparity in strength was, for the second line of the rebel army was hidden behind a fold of land. Even so, Rupert's charge scattered the rebel horse upon the left, or west, of their line, there commanded by Cromwell's son-in-law, Ireton, who was wounded. But Cromwell's horse on the right had once more a complete success and decided the issue in half an hour. It was not only his greatly superior numbers which did this; it was the renewal of his peculiar tactic of Marston Moor. Having scattered the horse in front of him, he checked his well-disciplined force, detached but a few to continue the pursuit, and with the mass of close-packed cavalry wheeled at once to the left, catching the Royalist infantry, not only in flank, but actually in formation for retreat. The whole Royalist force was destroyed as a military organization. Five in seven were killed, wounded, or captured, all the train was taken, the King's private papers fell into his enemies' hands, and his own person was only saved at the last moment by the vigour of a subordinate.

This decisive and final action of Naseby on Saturday, June 14, was the conclusion of the war. It sputtered out as all such widespread campaigns do, but the thing was over.

In Scotland, through the absence in England of the large Presbyterian army, Montrose with a force of Highlanders had worked miracles for the King. After other successful operations he had won at Kilsyth a complete victory over the Covenanters, killing five-sevenths of their small army; but his mountaineers, who were not a true military force, melted away. The return of the trained forces found at Kelso only a month later a mere remnant of some hundreds. When these had surrendered on the promise that their lives should be saved they were massacred by the special orders of the Presbyterian clergy, as had been the women in the Royalist camp after Naseby; but in this Scottish case not only were the soldiers killed when their captors broke faith with them, and the women, but little children as well.

Poor Charles in desperation had gone north with an insufficient remnant towards Chester, in the hope of effecting a junction with

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Montrose, when it was already too late. In front of the walls of that town he saw his last effective force destroyed before his eyes at Rowton Heath (September 23, 1645).

Meanwhile the last embers were being stamped out. Bristol had been retaken from Rupert in August 1645, Exeter had surrendered. Devizes had gone, and Winchester; and the dreadful story of the Puritan sack and murders at Basing House were now history. A small relieving force under Astley which attempted to reach Oxford, to which town Charles had retired, was beaten at Stow-on-the-Wold in March 1646. The army in Ireland which was still in being could not be used, for there were no ports in the Royalist hands to receive it. On April 26 of that year the King left Oxford in disguise with two companions, giving instructions that if they were not relieved within a fortnight (which, of course, they were not) the garrison of the town was to surrender. The fugitive royal head had no fixed plan. He thought for one moment of flying by sea, but on May 5, choosing what was apparently the least of many evils, he surrendered to the Scottish army which was besieging Newark, entering their headquarters on May 6, 1646.

**The King as Prisoner.** Charles now entered into the three periods of his captivity—first in the hands of the Scots, then of the so-called Parliament, lastly of the Army—that is, of Cromwell.

(1) *Prisoner of the Scots.* Charles in the hands of the Scottish army was treated with dignity as King; but his religion was flouted. He complained bitterly of the bullying to which he was subjected, having to listen to their extempore prayers, being forbidden the ministration of his own Church of England, to which he was so devotedly attached, and of chaplains who were equally devoted to his service. He was free to continue negotiations, and did so, offering the delegation of the rebel leaders from Westminster to give up command of the militia for ten years, and even to make a certain compromise in the matter of religion, allowing an experiment in presbytery. But, of course, he would not abandon the Church of England altogether, and, because he would not, his terms were refused. The important thing, however, that was happening now was not these, nor any further negotiations (all of which were equally futile), but the grand question of who should possess the King—the Scots, so that they might sell him to get their pay; the politicians at

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Westminster, to support their authority; Cromwell—*i.e.*, the Army—that he might be (ultimately) got rid of. For as long as Charles lived the rebel leaders were in peril.

The Scots had no desire to continue the ownership of his person, save as a bargaining point. They could not take back with them to Scotland a man who refused to take the Covenant, but they could use him to obtain money. They were owed £400,000 (about two and a half millions in our money, and of vastly more in social values under the conditions of that time); by so much had the tribute due to the Scots for deciding the war in favour of the Rebellion fallen into arrears. After much haggling they were promised half—£200,000—in cash, and the other half later. They would not hand over the King until they had got the whole of the first £200,000, anyhow. The last instalment of this was paid on February 3, 1647, arriving at the Scottish headquarters in good solid gold, packed in a long line of carts; and the King was duly handed over to the delegation of the politicians from Westminster.

(2) *Prisoner of the Parliamentarians.* The Parliamentarians at Westminster were very anxious for their future. In theory they were the authority commanding the Army; but the Army had the actual power, the physical force, and might at any moment use it. They hoped, as Parliamentarians do, to get the better of physical force by intrigue. The actual possession of the King's person was invaluable to them. They could use the authority it conveyed to the popular mind at large, and they could use it as a great asset in their attempt to coax or bribe the Army into disbanding itself. They put the King into Holmby House, near Northampton, on his way to which from the North he had been greeted by cheering crowds, for the average Englishman was already by this time wholeheartedly for a restoration—the military taxation alone was an intolerable burden; the perpetual raiding and foraging, billeting and plunder, had wearied men out. What restriction of the King's power the ordinary taxpayer might still demand there is no telling, but that opinion now supported the monarchy was clear from the attitude of the populace wherever the King passed.

The Parliamentarians needed *some* force to defend their usurped power. But they dreaded the now virtually independent Army. The Parliament ordered Fairfax to disband the Army, save for a portion of it which was to be sent over to

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Ireland to reconquer that country. The Army replied by organizing itself politically, refusing to disband, and insisting on receiving the very large arrears of pay which were due to it. They also refused to be drafted for service in Ireland.

Cromwell, who was at once the most striking figure in the Commons and the unquestioned head morally in the Army, though Fairfax was nominally its chief, played double, pretending to each party that he was serving its interests. These parties, the Army and the so-called Parliament, called themselves Independents and Presbyterians, the quarrel taking on, as all things then did, religious labels. But the true division was not one of religion: it was one of real power against paper power. The politicians were increasingly frightened of the Army; the Army cared less and less for the politicians. When the politicians had had the King in their keeping for just under four months Cromwell summoned a small secret meeting to his house in London, and there arranged for the kidnapping of Charles. He used a young cornet of horse, Joyce by name, who came to Holmby House with a large mounted force on June 3 of that year, 1647, and carried the King away.

(3) *Prisoner of the Army.* Charles was now possessed by, and at the mercy of, the only real force left in England—the Army; it could lodge him where it chose and do with him what it chose. Now, the Army meant Cromwell. At first the possession of the King's person would be used to overcome Parliament. Later, when that was accomplished, he could be put to death. But Cromwell's design could not be carried out save after a preliminary process long drawn out and delicate; for, though he was the true chief of the soldiers and idolized by them for his victories and for his great capacity in their trade, he had to consider their moods; and Fairfax was still nominally his superior.

**Cromwell's Plan.** We now enter one of the most interesting brief phases in the history of England—the successful intrigue of Cromwell to get Charles Stuart out of the way by having him killed.

Conclusions of this sort in history are not reached by direct documentary evidence. It is impossible in the nature of things that they should be so, for men do not write down such plans, nor, unless they are fools, divulge them. But the various steps of what followed could not have been designed save by one

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commanding brain, for they are all exactly co-ordinated, and lead to the end which Cromwell could not but have desired. For Cromwell not only excelled at intrigue, but excelled in lucidity of thought. He saw more clearly than anyone else what many others also saw, that after all they had done the leaders of the Rebellion were not safe until Charles Stuart should be dead. A man who knew Cromwell thoroughly, who was at his side, and who admired him vastly, the poet Marvell, gives us to understand exactly that. Cromwell wove a long and careful design, the end and object of which was the killing of the King.

His first step would be to use the rising emotions of the Army so that they should not master him, but that he could turn them to his own purposes. After he had done that the second step would be getting the person of the King into close custody where none could get at it, either to help him escape or to make any effective bargain with him for return to power. The third step would be to arrange for his being tried and executed after eliminating all forces that might stand in the way: notably such of the remaining Parliamentarians as might still dare to withstand the soldiers.

**The Use of the Army.** The Army, exasperated by the threat to disband them and to send a detachment to Ireland, and clamorous for their pay, began to see red. A movement arose in the autumn of 1647 called the Levellers. Nothing makes men more feel their equality with their fellow-men than service in arms. The soldiers took to violent politics, demanded manhood suffrage, yearly Parliaments, and what not. There were attempts at rebellion, which Cromwell himself crushed with great vigour and personal courage. Meanwhile there was encouraged a parallel outcry against Charles Stuart, the author of all that these soldiers had suffered through long years of war. Let Charles be tried for such crimes.

A mood of this kind served a double purpose. It made Charles fear immediately for his life, so that Cromwell could shepherd him into closer confinement, and it prepared opinion for the tragedy which Cromwell obviously had by this time begun to work, and it had been part of his plan to treat Charles with exceptional kindness. He had been allowed to see his children and to have his own chaplain, and was thus the more likely to believe what he was told.

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**The Anonymous Letter and the Flight.** Charles was at Hampton Court when, early in the second week of November 1647, he was shown by Whalley, his guardian, a letter saying there was fear of his assassination, and he received another anonymous letter telling him his life was in danger. Meanwhile this Whalley, Cromwell's friend, confidant, and cousin, who had been put to guard the King's movements, doubled the sentries, in order to emphasize this impression of danger to the King's life. But he took good care to leave unguarded the back door giving on the river. Thus egged on, Charles fled on November 11. Two devoted friends helped him down to Southampton Water, where apparently some one had given them to expect that a boat would be ready to help the King get away overseas. No boat appeared. The two friends, of whom the closest was Ashburnham, went over to the Isle of Wight and saw the governor, Hammond. He was the nephew of one of Charles's chaplains. That fact had certainly been represented to them as favourable. But he was really, though timid, a creature of Cromwell's, having married into the family of Cromwell's cousin Hampden.

Charles reluctantly put himself under the protection of this man, going over to the island, where he was held in Carisbrooke Castle and soon kept a close prisoner.

**The Sham Negotiations.** There followed many months of negotiations, which Charles was allowed to conduct, with the Scotch and with the Parliamentarians. There was a debate on all manner of points. Attempts were made by the King, who was quite unsuited for this kind of intrigue, to play one party against another. Strangely generous offers were made to him from Cromwell's side, on conditions which it was known he would not accept: offers which were not intended to be accepted or carried out. The whole thing was a blind. No one had any real power to save Charles, except the Army and its dominating figure, and to save Charles was the last thing Cromwell desired.

Efforts were made against the armed power which now had England in its grip. There was armed revolt in the south-east, crushed by Fairfax at Maidstone and later by the surrender of Colchester. There was rebellion in Pembroke in that same year, 1648, and the Scotch, feeling they had been duped, made a most incompetent effort under Hamilton to save the King. They marched down by the western road through Lancashire in a straggling, disconnected fashion. Cromwell came up at

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speed from Pembroke to Yorkshire, while the Scotch were beyond the Pennines, crossed that range, fell upon them with a force less than half theirs in number, and destroyed them in the region of Preston (middle of August 1648).

As the year closed the King, who had made futile efforts to escape, was allowed on parole into the town of Newport, the capital of the Isle of Wight, there to continue his negotiations with the Parliamentarians and the rest, which he himself now knew and openly said to be meaningless.

On the last day of November 1648 a troop of horse appeared before the house which he occupied at Newport. His friends urged him to fly; the night was dark and stormy, without a moon; he could certainly have escaped, and some boat would have ventured to sea. But he said he was bound in honour by his parole. Immediately after the armed force Cromwell had sent took him away in a coach to Yarmouth harbour, on the north-eastern shore of the island, twelve miles off, and thence on the next day, December 1, a close prisoner, to Hurst Castle, at the end of a sand-spit on the opposite Hampshire coast.

There he was kept while the rest of the plan was played out.

**The Killing of the King.** On the same day that Charles was locked up in Hurst Castle the Army was ordered to occupy London by force. Cromwell was on his way back to the capital, but carefully kept away from it, in order to cover his tracks until what was to be done should be accomplished. What was to be done was to use his armed men for getting rid of the last resistance of the politicians. One of his colonels, a certain Pride, appeared at the door of the Commons on December 6, refused entry to any who might try to save the King, imprisoning a number of them and leaving only about a tenth of the original House, who could be trusted to do what they were told. This operation came to be known as Pride's Purge. Immediately after it Cromwell entered London.

Next the King was brought up by slow stages to Windsor, where he spent Christmas, and where the last poor relics of state were taken from him. On New Year's Day what was left of the Commons passed an ordinance to set up a court for trying Charles, naming no less than 135 judges, the idea being to make the number as large as possible, so that as many as possible should be in the same boat in what would certainly be a perilous business if ever the dynasty were restored, but one which

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Cromwell had decided to be necessary if his own life were to be saved. As it was, nothing like half of these 135 would risk the task which the clearest-headed of them had demanded. Only fifty-two answered to their names when the roll was called on January 8. On the 20th the trial of Charles in Westminster Hall began. On Saturday, January 27, he was condemned to death after the most horrible scenes had taken place, a lady who had protested being publicly branded with red-hot irons, and one of Cromwell's colonels spitting in the King's face. It was difficult to get signatures for the death-warrant, for the actual writing down of one's name made one run the greatest risk of all in case of a restoration; but the determination of Cromwell and the awe of his armed power succeeded. He had said to one of them, "I will have your name, and I will have it here," and he gathered fifty-eight signatures at last.

The condemnation, then, had been pronounced on that Saturday, January 27. The King at the week-end was allowed to see his children, taken from Whitehall to St James's Palace, and thence on the morning of Tuesday, January 30, 1649, conducted, between long files of soldiers and to the sound of drums, back to Whitehall, where a scaffold stood, surrounded by great bodies of mounted troops to keep back the crowds of people.

The day was very cold, with occasional flakes of snow, great flocs of ice in the river, and a sky overcast.

The King remained in the palace some hours. Between half-past two and three he came out upon the scaffold, a small group about him, including his friend Juxon, the one whom he had long ago made Bishop of London. He read a protest, affirming that he died for the liberties of the people of England, and offered himself to the executioner. His head fell at one blow.

# XI

## THE DEATH OF THE MONARCHY

### THE VOID

#### CHARLES II (FIRST PART)

**Nature of the Gap.** For more than eleven years after the killing of Charles I, from January 30, 1649, to May 29, 1660, England was without a legitimate Government. There was no lawful authority for Englishmen to obey, nor anything that would speak for the nation.

Scotland was more fortunate in that for a few months of the period she had a national King, the son of Charles I having returned to lead the nation, but it was only a short episode, and one may say that as a whole the period was void. There was a succession of experiments, or rather makeshifts, some of them fantastic, all of them futile, none of them successful—odd Parliaments and committees and arrangements for military rule, but nothing with the air of permanence about it. One thing, indeed, stood unshaken throughout, and was the master throughout—the Army. And one man was conspicuously the chief of the Army, and therefore (first morally, afterwards actually) ruler of the country—Oliver Cromwell.

Cromwell was peculiar in this among single rulers, that he had no desire to command; it was a defect which went with his inability to construct. With supreme power at his disposal during several years he left no monument to posterity save an undying feud between the English and the Irish peoples, sprung from his attempted murder of Ireland—an attempt which just missed success. But this anomalous character in the first eleven years of Charles II's reign (generally called the Commonwealth, or later, from the title which Oliver Cromwell assumed, the Protectorate) must not conceal from us the truth that the Great Rebellion had won, and by its victory had transformed England politically, just as the first phase of the Reformation had transformed England in religion and character. The King was

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bound to return, but monarchy was not to return with him; the wealthier classes had triumphed through the action of their more determined section, which had taken up arms and defeated the sovereign, and England henceforward was to be more and more an aristocracy politically, with the name rather than the power of kingship retained as a symbol of national unity.

The eleven years fall politically into two parts; the first, of four and a half years, during which power still technically resided in the remnant of the old Parliament, ended on April 20, 1653, when Cromwell drove out the remains of that belated institution and openly began a personal rule. The second phase, of rather more than five years, continues from this date to Cromwell's own death on September 3, 1658, during which his dislike of responsibility and the business of Government, for which he felt himself (as he was) unfitted, caused him perpetually to try to share responsibility with sundry experimental bodies, which were always breaking down. After Oliver Cromwell's death there remains a sort of fag-end in which his son was supposed at first to succeed him, but had little real power, and which ends by Monk bringing the King back to England.

**The First Attempt at Irregular Government.** To provide for some sort of Government after the King's death a large Council of some forty-one men was appointed, much the most of whom were chosen from the body which still called itself the House of Commons—a body which, with certain renewals and the recall of certain members who had been driven out, came to a hundred and fifty. It was clear that an oligarchy would take the reins and continue to try to keep itself in power, and such a poor ending to their efforts was odious to the rank and file of the Army and the sincere republicans outside it. The finest republican figure was Lilburn, who from beginning to end never compromised upon the full democratic theory. There were mutinies, one of which in the spring after the King's death threatened to be serious; bodies of troops had revolted in the West of England, and another body was marching to join them from the South. Cromwell showed the greatest energy; he marched at once from the Cotswolds, covering forty miles a day, took the mutineers prisoners, and saw to it that three of the ringleaders should be shot. When unity and discipline had been restored he was eager to undertake the reconquest of Ireland: it was his chief task, and his crimes and excesses in that country

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are, historically, the most memorable of his achievements, and, as I have said, the only ones that bore permanent fruit.

**Oliver Cromwell in Ireland.** Ormonde, commanding the combined army of the English Royalist forces in Ireland and the national forces with them, was heavily defeated just outside Dublin by Jones early in August 1649, and a fortnight later Cromwell himself landed. He had a good siege-train, by means of which it was hoped that any walled city resisting him would fall. He first made north for Drogheda, which he took on September 11, massacring the Royalist garrison there and almost all the civilians. Three thousand people were butchered, and Cromwell wrote a letter home describing a man burning to death on the steeple of the church. We have very horrible accounts by eyewitnesses of what went on, including a peculiarly repulsive story of the murdering of a young lady of rank by Cromwell's soldiers. Next he turned southward to attack Wexford, where another massacre took place, upon much the same scale, made the worse by the fact that it was launched after a promise to accept the surrender of the garrison on terms and the sparing of all lives. Cromwell's excuse for behaviour of this kind was that merciless barbarity would so cow the Irish that the war could be brought to an end at a blow.

In this calculation he was quite wrong; the fighting dragged on for three years, and there was a protracted and heavy resistance made by several towns long after he himself had returned to England in the spring of the next year. The campaign ended in a large number of scrimmages or pitched fights, each involving a local surrender, where each defeated garrison obtained terms and was allowed to leave the country. Some 34,000 were thus exiled of the soldiers alone.

When the victory was complete a deliberate plan was drawn up to destroy the Irish as a people. The inhabitants, including the most recent intruders, were still, all but one-eighth of them, Catholic, but no Catholic was to own land save in Connaught. Thousands were condemned to death, and thousands more sold as slaves in the West Indies; of the very many condemned to death most had made good their escape—two hundred only were executed. How many were actually driven beyond the Shannon into Connaught is debated, but the upshot of the affair was that, whereas at its origin more than half the land of Ireland was in the hands of native Catholics, at its close a little

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mile and a half to the south of Dunbar town. The next day, just before a tempestuous sunrise, Cromwell drew up his plan. His tactical skill was as great as his strategy was wanting; he had allowed himself to be cut off, but he destroyed almost in a moment, just after sunrise, the Scottish army in front of him.

This decisive victory, the battle of Dunbar, was won on September 3, 1650. All the Scottish guns, ammunition, and baggage were taken, and the bulk of their forces were prisoners or dead before the pursuit ended. Cromwell could now do what he willed; and he went back to Edinburgh, while the King escaped northward to the mountains. But, though Oliver was in possession of the capital (having got hold of the castle of Edinburgh before Christmas), Charles was crowned on New Year's Day at Scone. Cromwell occupied more country, cutting off the Scotch by Stirling from their northern supports, and the young King decided on a bold move—he would invade England on the chance of getting substantial Royalist aid, which failed him.

The roads by the west side were free, and he could march down them. He did so, making for Carlisle from Stirling, with something like 12,000 or 13,000 men, and with a clear three days' start. The march through Lancashire occupied the middle of August. He got across the Mersey, the English forces gathered to stop him being as yet insufficient, and by the 22nd of the month he was at Worcester, where the mayor proclaimed him. Within a week of his arrival the English concentration in front of Worcester was complete, and Cromwell had arrived, having left Monk to hold Scotland with 5000 men. The action was engaged upon the anniversary of Dunbar, September 3, 1651—a date which Oliver Cromwell, with pardonable superstition, had begun to regard with awe. The result was hardly in doubt—the English troops were long-trained veterans; they were twice the number of the royal force, the great mass of which were Scotchmen and therefore aliens and enemies, though it might have been much larger had not the Covenanters protested the principle that the very numerous Catholics who would join should be admitted. The invading army was destroyed; Charles himself escaped, receiving loyal aid from the people as he went through South England in disguise, and got over to France from Shoreham harbour on a collier. So ended the last action of the Civil War.

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**The Dutch War.** The fleet of the rebels (created by Charles I, as we have seen, and betrayed) found a commander of the highest talent in Blake. Its main task in the first three years after the execution of the King was an attack upon the Dutch commercial competition. The Dutch were the carriers of the world, and during the Civil War the weakening of England had increased their advantage. But in 1651, under the influence of Cromwell, the Navigation Act was passed, which forbade goods to be received into English ports unless they came in English ships or the ships of the country of origin. The struggle with the Dutch by sea had varied fortunes, but ended in Blake's complete victory in 1653, after which England and Holland stood side by side, as was natural enough to two countries both of which were commanded by wealthy Protestant oligarchies, both of which stood in fear of a large Catholic minority within their territories, and both of which were commercial and maritime. England had during this struggle passed Holland in the race for maritime commerce, and henceforward preserved her lead.

**The End of the Long Parliament.** The irritation in the Army against the enduring fossilized fragment of the Long Parliament continuing to claim authority was intense. The people at large, of course, regarded that isolated body with contempt. It was not difficult for Cromwell to put an end to it and to make his power, which was already the only real Government of the country, an absolute thing. He came down to the House with a small force of soldiers on April 20, 1653, abused the members freely, and drove them away. His last remark on this occasion is famous; he looked at the Mace and said, "What is that bauble? Take it away!"

But it must not be imagined that Cromwell acted thus through ambition; he did not even so act from a mere desire to govern. Of all those who have achieved such a position through the accidents of war he is the only one prominent in history to whom the burden of governmental responsibility was odious. He felt himself that he could not adequately undertake it; he was not made for that task and was always trying to share it with others, but he discovered, as all men do who make the experiment, that an individual, if he is to keep order at all, must keep it without rivals to hinder him. ✓

**The First Experiment.** Cromwell's first experiment in

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ridding himself of responsibility was to summon a special limited body known to history as the Little Parliament. It was not without distinguished membership, although it has had to suffer much ridicule;<sup>1</sup> but it was revolutionary in temper, impossible to handle, and had to resign itself into the hands of the master before the end of the year (1653), after having sat five months.

**The Second Experiment: the Protectorate.** On December 16, four days after the break-up of the Little Parliament, a document was produced called the Instrument of Government. There was to be a Council of Fifteen (a manageable number, which betrays Cromwell's hand), and there was to be a House of Commons duly elected, though in the true tradition of the Great Rebellion it was to be a select oligarchy of the wealthier classes. No one could be a member unless he had what to-day would be the equivalent of a good deal over £1000 in land or goods or both, and, what was more significant, no one could vote for the election of a member unless he were similarly fortunate. And, of course, no one of the numerous Catholic minority could be elected or could vote, nor could those who had sided with the King.

At the same time the rule was to be in the hands of one man, who was to be called the Protector of the Kingdom—that man being, of course, Cromwell. The new House of this second experiment was summoned to meet on Cromwell's lucky day, September 3, but again he was disappointed. The House questioned the new Constitution, proceeded to a sort of independence, and hampered the executive power of the man who was now, in spite of himself, responsible for public order and the management of foreign affairs—so the unfortunate Cromwell was once more entangled in a failure. He had promised to let the House sit for five months—that is, until February 3, 1655. He now suddenly sprang it upon them that he would interpret the word 'month' as meaning a lunar month, and dissolved them on January 22.

**The Great Military and Naval Position of England.** It is one of the characteristics of rule by one man, however unwilling, and that man unrestrained by custom and able to call upon the full resources of the state, that it nearly always

<sup>1</sup> It has been nicknamed 'the Barebones Parliament,' from the membership of one called Praise-God Barbones, a leather-dealer in Fleet Street.

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gives the country he governs great strength for a brief period, but usually at the price of great economic strain. In a country of not much more than a million families, much the greater part of them living on small farms, Cromwell gathered what would be to-day three-quarters of a million pounds *a month* for his army alone. And naval expenditure, though very much less, was in the same proportion. He was levying thus in customs and confiscations far more than double anything Englishmen had yet had to meet. But such a revenue gave him superb fighting forces, quite out of proportion to the then scale of the country. His sailors were the only ones in Europe who now had long-continued experience on fighting ships extended over many years, and his army was in the main an army of veterans.

On this account he enjoyed the highest prestige among the great Governments of Europe, whose possible resources were far greater, but who had not the power to use them thus in concentrated fashion. He was able to fight Spain and did so, failed in his main object of capturing her chief island in the West Indies, but did at least get hold of Jamaica, which turned out more valuable than he thought. Later on, when he decided to make an alliance with France, the help of his trained infantry and cavalry was so eagerly sought that the French supported his satisfaction of a private whim. Cromwell was determined to back up certain up-country Protestant mountaineers, subjects of the Duke of Savoy, who had been raiding the more fertile lands of their Catholic neighbours in the lower valleys. The French Government took up their cause to obtain the use of the unique English professional army, after which Cromwell, with no clear idea of what his policy would lead to—and, indeed, the whole of his foreign policy was exceedingly confused—repaid them by helping in the war they were waging against the Spanish power on the borders of Belgium. The French promised him the Spanish town of Dunkirk, which his troops helped to take, and which was duly handed over to him and manned with an English garrison in the summer of 1658, just before he died.

**The Third Experiment.** Unlucky with experimental Parliaments, Cromwell decided on absolute rule—the thing that suited him least and which he most dreaded. He divided England into ten (later twelve) districts, giving despotic command over each to one of his Major-Generals, and he toyed

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with the idea of giving himself some peace and security by calling himself King and founding a dynasty. But in May 1656 he decided, with his usual vacillation in such things, to abandon that policy. Some contemporaries say it was due to his fear of the Army—but much more likely, from what we know of his character and manner, it was due to his dislike of the grandeur and the burden. We must always remember that until he was over forty Cromwell had never had to command anything but a comfortable household, and that, though he discovered such admirable military talents in the tactical use of cavalry, the political control of other men formed no part of his experience or desires.

**The Last Experiment.** But Cromwell, whom it is impossible not to pity in these successive efforts of his to obtain companionship in the heavy task of Government, was determined to have yet one more experiment. Had he lived there would perhaps have been no end to them. Just before entering the last year of his life (1658) there was designed a full Parliament on the old lines, though of a novel membership. He opened it in very great state—a regular Parliament of two Houses in the traditional form. He did not call his Upper House the House of Lords, but “The Other House,” and composed it of sixty-two fairly important people, including members of his own family, and even certain of the old peers. They met on January 20, 1658. Cromwell made a speech from the throne in traditional fashion; he then preached a sermon on the eighty-fifth Psalm, and left them to their labours. But these were so unsatisfactory that at the end of the fortnight, on February 4, he dissolved them in a passion—protesting loudly what an intolerable thing it was to have to govern at all!

**Death of Oliver Cromwell.** But to govern somehow this great soldier but most bewildered man was compelled, whether he would or no. It was not easy, for the intolerable burden of taxation could not be continued indefinitely, and by what warrant save that of mere force could he go on levying these enormous sums of money? Even so he was getting deeper and deeper into debt. There had been plots against his life, which terrified him. He was not yet sixty, but his health was giving way. On August 6 of that year (1658) his favourite daughter Elizabeth died after an illness which he had watched

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with a breaking spirit, and his own dissolution followed. He made his will three weeks after his daughter's death, after overhearing a whispered conversation of his physicians. On the morrow he assured his wife and his principal doctor in private that he had a revelation from God promising that he should not die—whereupon he rapidly grew much worse. A week after this divine communication a storm of extraordinary violence broke over Europe, and as it was subsiding three days later, on his own lucky day, September 3, he died at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Before leaving the mention of this man's strange fortunes it must be noted that, under his government, the Jewish community was silently allowed to return to England, for the first time since the reign of Edward I. It is of little personal consequence in his own story, for since the alliance between the Dutch Protestant merchants and the Jews such an example was bound to be followed this side of the North Sea. Moreover, there had been plenty of Jews in England concealing their nationality and tolerated. But the new policy marks the starting-point of what became at last a firm and cordial understanding between England and the Jewish people, cemented by Freemasonry in the next century and becoming in the nineteenth a special characteristic of England.

**The End of the Confusion.** An unnatural effort was made to start a sort of dynasty by putting the amiable, and in many ways admirable, son of Oliver Cromwell, Richard, who had the grace to be neither fanatical nor without humour, in the place of his father. A Parliament was called, the Army was discontented with it, and Richard had to obey the soldiers and dissolve it, which he did towards the end of April of the next year, 1659. To mark its triumph the Army recalled as a sort of attendant buffoon the remnant of the old Long Parliament—now called the Rump in derision. There were forty-two of the old members, and Lenthall, the original Speaker, was at their head. Their attempt to assert a moral authority over the Army made them ridiculous, and at last the farce came to an end by the action of Monk.

It will be remembered that Monk had been left in Scotland by Cromwell nearly eight years before, when he had had to march down to meet the Scottish invasion at Worcester. During those eight years Monk had created a formidable little

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army of 7000 veterans, the officers of which he had so carefully picked that he could do with that force what he would. He set out on the march for England, crossing the Tweed at Coldstream on December 8. The move had been admirably timed; there rose up explosive cries from every side in favour of a new and free Parliament, to be elected as in the old days of the monarchy, and a rising universal feeling against the intolerable burden, financial and tyrannical, of the Army—the main Army, as distinguished from Monk's small but excellent separate force. The Navy joined the move, coming up the Thames. Monk appealed to the government of the City, declaring for a free Parliament, and insisted on the Rump dissolving itself; a new House of Commons was summoned which, under the suddenly released temper of the time, was strongly for a Restoration. Monk wrote to Charles in his exile, organized the militia, and suppressed an attempted revolt on the part of the Army. The House of Lords assembled again, and on May 29, 1660 (his thirtieth birthday), King Charles II landed at Dover.

## THE FALSE RESTORATION

### CHARLES II (SECOND PART)

**Nature of the Reign.** Outwardly the restoration of Charles I's son to England was a restoration of the monarchy. The populace certainly believed it to be so, and were wild with joy; and even in the wealthier classes few appreciated what had really happened—which was their own victory over the Crown. The name of King would be preserved in future, but the reality of kingly power would pass more and more into the hands of a governing class composed of the gentry, who were the landowners, the wealthier merchants, and the lawyers. This governing class was to have for its two committees the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and for its powerful ally the beginnings of a banking system in the City of London.

The governing class at once got rid of the old royal revenue, so that the Government had henceforward to exist as best it could on what the gentry chose to grant it in Parliament from time to time; and the gentry also increasingly encroached upon

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the executive functions of the now tottering Crown. In such circumstances Charles's whole effort turned upon preserving the title of King and what could be, for the moment, saved of the royal power: it was a losing fight, a fight for a symbol only at last, but he kept it up with the highest skill and indomitable tenacity. The method he used to achieve this end was a perpetual playing of rivals one against the other. To free himself partially from the control of his richer subjects he would support the policy of the French King in Europe and receive a subsidy in exchange. To prevent the French King thus becoming his master he would next support Holland against France. At home he would as far as possible counterbalance the gentry of the National Church by favouring toleration for Dissenters, and for the dwindling but still very large Catholic minority. On the other hand, whenever there was a strong demand for the prosecution of Dissenters or of Catholics he would yield to it rather than risk his position. The whole of his long reign of twenty-five years was spent in this sort of skilful manœuvring. In a sense he succeeded, for the title of King was preserved in England, and some of its power as well was preserved also so long as Charles himself lived and for four years more: but in reality he failed, for the monarchy was past saving. It had received in the Great Rebellion a wound which progressively weakened it, and when once Charles had gone it suffered its deathblow. The governing class turned the dynasty out, chose a nominal King of their own from abroad, and became completely masters of the country.

The further general characteristics of the period are the continued expansion of commerce and settlement beyond the seas—Asiatic trade and American colonization; the strengthening of the English fleet, which had been created by the Stuarts since Buckingham's time and was now made a great instrument of war by the Admiral, Charles's brother, James, Duke of York. It was also a period in which the splendour of the French court and its military achievements under Charles's cousin Louis XIV influenced all Europe, including England; it was a period in which there was an appreciable movement on the part of individuals, but not in great numbers, towards Catholicism; and it was one in which there was a strong reaction against the Puritan morals imposed by force during the years of military despotism which had just passed. The court was

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dissolute, and both the King and his brother were under the reproach of great laxity.

Apart from the decline of monarchy, the two chief individual efforts of the period which were to be of most effect upon posterity were the introduction of divorce and the statute under which the freedom of the already decaying peasantry of England, yeomen both large and small, was destroyed; they were turned from freeholders into tenants at will, paying competitive rents to the governing classes. Both these events, as is commonly the case with origins of importance, seemed of far less significance at the time than they really were.

**The Destruction of the King's Endowment.** The real character of the new time was seen when the elective assembly which recalled Charles II to England proceeded, even before the first Parliament was called, to destroy the royal revenue. As we saw during the disputes between Charles I and his Parliaments, the old royal income, inherited from feudal times, on which the King was supposed to live, had become gravely insufficient through the fall in the value of money and the development of the modern state. It barely provided one-quarter of what was necessary for carrying on government; another quarter, rapidly increasing, was provided by the customs, payable by tradition at the ports: for the remaining half the King had to run into debt to the City moneylenders, and then to beg for voluntary grants from the rich in Parliament, a position which gave them increasing power over him.

We have seen how Charles I met the situation successfully by keeping at peace, and could carry on until a war forced on him by the Scotch compelled him to approach his wealthier subjects again for aid. We have also seen how that situation led to the Great Rebellion and its successes.

Now, on the so-called restoration of the monarchy the chief care of the wealthy class in their assemblies was to destroy the old feudal income of the King. This was drawn from such sources as money paid on taking up a landed inheritance held of the Crown, money paid in connection with wardships in the control of the Crown, etc. These payments came in the main from the great landowners, who had hitherto remained, in theory, the feudal dependants of the King. These payments the landowners now wiped out, and shifted the burden from their shoulders on to those of the English people as a whole. The old

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dues which they had had to pay they replaced by an excise on beer and wine. They voted the customs for life, and it was calculated that these sums combined would provide a permanent income for the Government of £1,200,000 a year. As a fact it never came to any such total; the Crown remained permanently embarrassed even during peace, and was short of its proper revenue by a rate, taking the average of the whole reign, of something like one-third of what it should have received. The gap was met by the disastrous policy of selling the Crown lands, by secret subsidies received from abroad (a comparatively small item, about one-eighth of the whole), by the dowry of Charles's Queen, by the sale of Dunkirk; but much the greatest part of it, something like two-thirds, remained as an increasing embarrassment to the King, accumulating at crushing usury.

**Hyde and the Duke of York's Marriage.** The man who had the most individual power at the beginning of the reign was Edward Hyde, who was raised to the peerage, and a year after Charles's return made Earl of Clarendon. He was a man with a remarkable knowledge of his fellows, and with more wisdom than appeared in his somewhat insignificant chubby face. Although his sympathies were with his own class rather than with the Crown, yet he had faithfully served Charles I when it came to actual rebellion, and continued to serve Charles II during his exile. He is the author of the classical memoirs on the period, his *History of the Great Rebellion*. He had naturally very great influence over the young King of thirty, to whom he had acted almost as a guardian.

Hyde, henceforth to be known as Clarendon, had a daughter Anne, a woman of strong character, who had laid a plan for her own advancement. She had allured the young Duke of York, the King's brother, during his exile, kept him off as long as things were doubtful, but the moment it seemed clear that there would be a restoration accepted him as her lover. When her child was about to be born James secretly married her. Her father was suspected of complicity in this, and it was the beginning of his great unpopularity. She became the mother of two girls who were each to be a Queen of England, Mary and Anne, and, through her domination over her husband, it was hers as much as any other influence which caused him to change his religion and to become Catholic.

**The Opposition to the Crown on Toleration.** Another

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form of successful aristocratic opposition to the decaying kingly power was the war waged by Parliament against religious toleration. Parliament was helped by the hatred felt, especially in London, for the Catholic minority, dwindled by 1660 to perhaps less than a fifth of the nation, even if we include those of no more than a family tradition of Catholicism, hardly a seventh if we count only those who were more or less openly attached to the old national religion. It was also helped by the reaction in favour of the Established Episcopalian Church among the landed classes. The independent Protestant sects and the Presbyterians had both tyrannized over the Church during and after the Civil Wars, and the desire for revenge was strong.

When Charles was restored to a badly shaken throne the advantage of toleration all round was obvious. Difference of organization among the Protestants was taken firm root, and the only chance of peace and amity seemed to be an acceptance of that fact. As for the Catholics, hundred years of economic ruin and violent persecution had reduced them to what they were; but the fall in their numbers had slackened, many of the social leaders had become indifferent, and some were inclining to return to the ancestral religion. The character of Charles himself inclined him to toleration. He was sceptical, he had strong personal and family ties with Catholics—notably his mother and his beloved sister, who had married Louis XIV's brother. And, as for the Dissenters, though he ridiculed their enthusiasm, he respected their courage, particularly that of the Society of Friends, called Quakers.

But the Parliament of squires, which was not dissolved for over eighteen years, were violently opposed to toleration—mainly to show their power against the Crown, partly from the bitter memories of oppression by Nonconformists during the Great Rebellion (which, in its earlier stages, had confiscated right and left, destroyed Church endowments, and ousted their clergymen), largely from a sound instinct that Catholicism was in spirit favourable to the monarchy and opposed to rule by the wealthy; and that toleration, if it were accepted as a general policy, would have to abandon the crushing out of Catholicism, on which policy the chief landed interests since the Reformation had been founded.

Charles had promised at Breda, in Holland, before his restoration to make "Indulgence for tender consciences." His first

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Parliament in the year after his restoration would have none of this spirit. At the end of the next year Charles told the Parliament his intentions, and soon after released the religious prisoners, Catholic and Protestant. But the Church insisted on uniformity, and 2000 parish clergymen lost their benefices. Charles yielded, as he always had to yield, to save the name of King, and to get a grant, without which Government could not be carried on. Parliament passed—and he accepted—the Conventicle Act of 1664, punishing any gathering, even in a private house, of more than five persons, for services other than those of the Established Church. Later the restrictions were more severely renewed, and during the whole of that Parliament's existence it successfully compelled the King to yield to it in that prime matter of toleration upon which he had set his heart. It was his master.

**The Irish Settlement.** Charles published on the Restoration a *Declaration* promising that the Irish landowners, Catholic and other, who had been dispossessed after Cromwell's invasion should have their property restored to them if they had neither joined the old Nationalist Confederation of 1641<sup>1</sup> nor personally taken up arms in connection with the Great Rebellion. This policy would have restored the bulk of the Catholic landowners whom Cromwell had robbed, but the Declaration was not carried out. There was attached to it a contradictory qualification. Men in possession of the stolen lands were to receive compensation out of other lands forfeited by rebellion. Of these there were not nearly enough. Also everything was done to prevent justice, because it would have offended powerful moneyed interests in England, especially among the aristocracy and in the City of London.

The City had advanced money for Cromwell's conquests and had also lent it to the new settlers on the security of their loot; everything therefore was done in London to defeat the claims of the original Irish owners. Further, there was resistance on all sides by the new owners. The Irish House of Commons, which was drawn from the small Protestant minority, had the chief hand in the settlement. The thing dragged on for years—from 1661 to 1665—and in the upshot matters were

<sup>1</sup> When the Irish had rebelled in 1641 to regain possession of their land, there had been formed a *National Confederation* among their leaders, which body was, in the eyes of English law, treasonable.

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left almost unchanged and Cromwell's spoliation of Ireland was confirmed. It was the cause of all that has since happened. The Irish have never accepted their ruin. This enormous failure of what was expected to be an act of justice and peace was not directly due to the King, but indirectly it was, for it was due to what governed all his actions, his determination to keep his crown even at the cost of subjection to his richer subjects. Charles dared not go against their interests, particularly those of the moneylenders in the City of London. These were becoming more and more powerful. Their credit notes were growing into the beginnings of a paper currency. They advanced credits, rather than money, to the Crown, charged from 8 to 10 per cent., and imposed a burden which swelled yearly. Charles was ever at issue with them, but could not openly defy them.

**Doubts on the Succession.** Charles had married Catherine of Braganza, a princess of the royal house of Portugal, on May 21, 1662. She suffered from many miscarriages, and by 1670 it had become gradually apparent that she would never give the King an heir. Doubts on the succession are serious when kingship still has a real meaning and there is no direct male heir. Kingship in England was failing, but it was still strong enough for factions to support claimants who might favour their objects. The lawful heir was James, Duke of York, younger brother of Charles, but the wealthy opposition to the Crown feared his tenacity and determination to resist them; moreover, a candidate dependent on the favour of the upper classes rather than upon a lawful claim to the throne would best suit their book. James was not popular, and this increased their opportunity. When his wife, Anne Hyde, died in 1671, leaving only two daughters, the opposition to James grew greater and was given violent impetus and wide support by the fact of James's conversion to Catholicism, which was becoming known about that time. His wife had become Catholic and had influenced him; and after her death he was determined to admit his conversion openly, and at last did so. Therefore another candidate was put in view, the King's illegitimate son, young Crofts (as he had been known in boyhood), the child of an old mistress in his exile. The King had had him brought up by the Oratorians in Paris, but called Protestant, and then made him Duke of Monmouth, and married him to the richest Scottish

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heiress of the day. Charles was known to have a great affection for him. This illegitimate son was at the moment of James's conversion a grown man, good-looking, dissolute, and weak, just the tool for intriguers. Another candidate to be favoured later, after 1677, was William, Prince of Orange, who had been given James's eldest daughter as wife in that year, and who was one of the leaders of Continental Protestantism. These efforts to exclude James from the succession and to supplant him by a prince who should be the nominee and servant of the wealthy are the main feature of the reign after it had gradually become certain that the Queen would bear the King no living heir.

**The Dutch War.** Before the Great Rebellion two nations were clearly to be rivals for the exploitation of the sub-tropical East and for the carrying of an international trade everywhere expanding. These were England and the newly independent Northern Provinces of the Netherlands, to-day called Holland. We have seen how Cromwell dealt with that rivalry.

Charles had inherited this situation. In West Africa and the Spice Islands, on one side of the world, and the North American seaboard, on the other, the sailors of the two nations were fighting irregularly but continuously. Between the Puritan English Calvinists of New England and those of Virginia the coast had been held by Dutchmen. On the Hudson was New Amsterdam. The English seized it, and called it, after their Lord High Admiral, New York. The English merchants complained that their Asiatic trade had been belligerently injured by the Dutch. They had lost millions. By 1664 the temper of the merchants was inflamed—especially in London—to a pitch which demanded war, and Charles said that he was the only man in the country who was reluctant. The Parliament voted a first and large sum for a war. The first great action was fought on June 3, 1665, between the East Anglian and Dutch coasts in a light south-westerly breeze. James, Duke of York, was in command as Lord High Admiral, and his seamanship, endurance, and courage won a great victory. The whole Dutch fleet would have been destroyed had not one of James's underlings, from cowardice or treason, given an order to slacken sail in the night, while James was resting after eighteen hours on deck all taken up with the heaviest fighting. James was for punishing the culprit, but he was a member of the House of

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Commons, so nothing was done until he had got away. Much later, when he was safe, his colleagues of the Commons were zealous against him, in order to weaken the Duke.

**The Plague and the Great Fire.** Immediately after came the Great Plague in London, which, during that summer of 1665, killed off 170,000, destroyed commerce, and crippled the finances. It was followed in 1666 by the Great Fire, which burned down nearly the whole of the capital. In our eyes to-day these two disasters stand out far above the Dutch war, but to contemporaries the armed struggle seemed equally important, and, in spite of the immense destruction of wealth and the interruption of trade, the conflict was continued. Public opinion was tenacious in spite of the disaster, but there were no sufficient financial resources. The Dutch, who had been under no such dreadful handicaps, spent *three times* as much as the English on the war. The squires in Parliament would not vote enough, and the Navy alone was a million in debt. There was nothing for it but to lay up the fleet in early 1667, although as long as there was money to keep it going it had proved equal to the Dutch for two years. The Dutch were amply provided, and sailed into the Thames in June of that year, broke through the defences of the Medway, and burned the royal ships there. Yet in the peace which Charles now made there was included a thing of capital importance to England for the future. The central coast of North America, which had been Dutch, was ceded to England, confirming the foothold the English had acquired on the Hudson and the Delaware; so the whole coast from Canada to Florida was henceforward to be in English hands. New York, New Jersey, and Delaware, the central districts on either side of the Hudson, were to become the keystone of the American system; but for them no united territory would have existed to spread English speech and law beyond the Atlantic, and their acquirement by Charles II has had a vast effect upon history.

**The Bankers.** The drying up of funds for the war had not only been due to Parliament's standing desire to cripple the King, but also to the new power of the banks. The banking system, already flourishing in Holland, was developing rapidly in London. Private individuals and the Government deposited their money with goldsmiths, originally for safety. Only a certain amount would be withdrawn in, say, a month by the

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depositors, and as much paid in. As we have seen, it was found that a balance always remained over, and the goldsmiths took to lending this out at usury—never less than 8 per cent. and often 10 per cent. The Government had to borrow from them at such rates, and this vastly increased Charles's financial burdens—for the bankers ate up the revenue, which became more and more assigned to them in advance. They were the other great menace to the King's position. The private expenditure on the court was insignificant compared with the public.

**The Triangle.** The years 1667–70 form the first turning-point in the reign. Charles then for the moment saved, by exceedingly skilful diplomacy, what could be saved of the monarchy; he had got rid of Clarendon, who had hitherto managed English affairs, and his opportunity was the situation in which his cousin, the young King of France, Louis XIV, found himself.

Louis had married the King of Spain's daughter. The Spanish Netherlands, that southern part of the Low Countries which had remained loyal to its sovereign when the Northern Dutch provinces made themselves independent, and which is to-day called Belgium, included the province of Flanders on their French frontier, with its chief town of Lille. By an old local custom called 'devolution,' which might fairly be regarded as extinct, Flanders had gone of old in some circumstances to the women of the reigning families, and on the death of his father-in-law, Philip IV of Spain, in 1665 Louis had claimed this province for his wife. In 1667 he proceeded to enforce the claim by war, and overran Flanders. The vast Spanish Empire also included the French-speaking district of the Jura, next to Switzerland. Louis was prepared to accept the Jura instead of Spanish territory in the Netherlands. The Dutch had allied themselves to Louis because they had always feared the Spanish power, from which they had with great difficulty separated themselves, but now Spain was in decay, and they were more frightened of seeing France advancing to the south of them; they prepared therefore to betray their ally.

Charles took advantage of all this. In late 1667 he told his envoy at Brussels, Sir William Temple, to sound De Witt, of the wealthy Dutch Republic, and propose an alliance between Holland and England for stopping the war and making Spain accept Louis's offer. The Dutch were delighted at the chance

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and formed the alliance which, being joined later by Sweden, was called the Triple Alliance. But Charles pointed out to Louis that it was not hostile to him. It only sought to compel Spain to accept what Louis had himself offered. The result of the new position was that Charles was in demand by both the French and the Dutch, and he could play the one against the other. If and when Louis was willing to pay for his support he would no longer be so completely at the mercy of grants from his wealthier subjects who were aiming at undoing the national monarchy.

Charles had thus created a 'triangle,' the changes of which he could ring at will, the three points being the Dutch, the French King, and the seditious party in the Commons. If the rich at home threatened to paralyse the King of England financially he could get immediate financial help from Louis. If Louis tried to play the master he could threaten him with the Dutch, and yield to and emphasize the anti-French body in the Parliament. If the Dutch thought that this would secure them commercial supremacy and the command of the sea he could approach Louis again. Thus playing on the three forces, relying on each in turn, Charles kept up to the end of the reign and maintained—for a time—the last remnants of English popular kingship, and yet secured the English people from foreign menace on either side. But it was a fencing extremely perilous, with the most venomous of his domestic enemies always ready to kill the Kingly power. He kept it up till his own death, but after that they had their way.

**The Ousting of the Peasants.** While these great but spectacular doings were passing, another thing, almost unnoticed in our histories but of even greater importance, was toward. We have already seen how the class of large land-owners were during all this generation breaking up the Crown above them. They were also breaking up the English peasantry below. They had already maintained all the feudal dues owing to *themselves* by the villagers when they abolished, in 1660, the feudal dues owed by *them* to the Crown. They now went a step farther.

In the end of the Cavalier Parliament, in 1679, was passed the *Statute of Frauds*, a law of more effect in ruining the English peasantry even than the enclosure of commons. By the Statute of *Frauds* any lease of land (among other contracts) must

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be in writing. Henceforward, therefore, no one could claim a lease unless he had written documents to show for it. Now, the bulk of the English peasants, perhaps still half the nation in the mid-seventeenth century, held under fee-farm lease from the local lord of the village—that is, they paid a traditional fixed sum for their land, like a ground-rent; but for the rest the land was inherited by their sons; no one could turn them off their farms or charge them a competitive rent or terminate their lease. A 'fee-farm lease' was a freehold. The fixed sum payable had never been anything like the full rental value of the land, and the great change in the value of money since the Middle Ages had made it nominal or very small. The English peasant was economically independent, an almost unembarrassed small owner. But very great numbers had no documents to show, especially among the smaller people. Their fee-farm leases were only traditional. Henceforward, after 1679, anyone could be asked to show his *written* title, and, if he had it not, was deemed to be a tenant at will, or no tenant at all until the local magnate to whom he had paid his dues granted him a new lease, and this he could make as long or as short as he pleased and fix it at the highest competitive rent. When that was done the small man ceased to be an owner. The results are seen in the great lessening in the number of yeomen between the generation before the Great Rebellion and that which lived through the last years of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth.

**The Treaty of Dover.** The firstfruit of the King's independent action was the Treaty of Dover, signed in May 1670. His sister, who had married Louis XIV's brother, was the intermediary in this. Charles, after Louis had made peace, proposed an alliance with him. There had been a project advanced by the Dutch of getting the French to partition the Spanish colonies between them, and this would have been ruinous to England. Meanwhile Charles could play on the anger of Louis at the Dutch treasons to himself, for after his alliance with them the Dutch had secretly approached his enemies.

The gross bad faith of the Dutch was a bond between Charles and his cousin, the French King, but that was not the motive at work. The object was, on Louis's part, to be certain that Charles would stand by him if he fought the Dutch to prevent a coalition against France. On Charles's part the object

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was to get a subsidy which should help to maintain the Navy in spite of the refusal by Parliament of adequate supplies. There was a strange clause that the King of England should declare himself a Catholic. It is unlikely or impossible that Louis wanted that done, for it would have rendered the alliance useless by the violent reaction it would have caused, prevented Charles's being able to help him at all, and probably dethroned him. It is certain that Charles had no such intention at the time. He liked the old religion, but he told his sister that his life and his present state of mind forbade his accepting it: also his throne was his passion, half worthless though it had become—for in executive matters (*e.g.*, the nomination and dismissal of ministers) he still acted as King of England. The real object of the clause was an excuse for making the subsidy larger.

The main weakness in the position created by the Treaty of Dover was that Charles would have the expense of using the fleet again in war. James, as Admiral, won yet another victory in 1672, and after the French King's attack on Holland had been checked and young William of Orange put at the head of Holland (his opponents had been assassinated) peace was signed.

But in the meanwhile the banks had refused to advance money for the national Navy even at 10 per cent. The Council defied them, and held up the short-term loans for a year, paying 6 per cent. on them in the interval. The bankers, countering, robbed their chests of their clients' deposits and bankrupted them, and thenceforward worked against the monarchy and in favour of revolution against it. The holding up of the loans for one year provided funds for the fleet, but it was the last time an English Government had the power to prefer national interests to those of the bankers. Later the two interests coincided, after England had become, in the next century, the chief banking centre of Europe.

**The First Divorce Bill.** In that same critical year, 1670—the year when Charles began his independent diplomacy and when it was finally seen that he could have no heir by his wife—took place one of the chief events in the religious and social history of England. The immemorial Christian doctrine of marriage was, in principle, abandoned. A certain Lord Roos had obtained from the Church courts a separation from his wife, who had abandoned him. A Bill was brought into Parliament to allow him to marry again, though his wife was

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still alive. Charles attended the debate in the Lords and supported the Bill. He had no intention of getting rid of his wife and marrying again for the sake of having a son, but his attitude would make his enemies think he *might* do so or keep them in fear. In this, as in everything else, he was playing to strengthen his hand against the rich men who were trying to destroy the last of the monarchy, and in supporting this innovation of 'terminable marriage' he weakened his foes by confusing them.

The Duke of York was against the Divorce Bill both as a Catholic and as presumptive heir to the throne. The bench of bishops did not vote against it in a body; two of them favoured the new doctrine in morals, but the laymen felt so strongly that the Bill became law by a majority of two only. Had the Protestant bishops been agreed on that one point of doctrine this religious revolution would have failed; but they were not. The innovation was thought shocking, and for many years—till 1692—there was no repetition of it. After 1715 the thing becomes commoner, a divorce taking place once a year on the average. After 1775 it is three a year. Till 1857 divorce remained a privilege of the very rich, for the cost of getting a Bill through Parliament is very great. Divorce after that date was made part of general law, but still cost a considerable amount in payment to the lawyers, so that the mass of working people were not affected. But the morality of divorce has come by this time to be taken for granted in England, and will doubtless in the near future become universal. The denial of no other Christian doctrine can have such a profound effect on the whole structure of society.

**Shaftesbury.** Abroad the French armies in 1672 overran all Holland save the maritime parts near the coast which lay behind the sea-level. De Witt was murdered; young Orange flooded the lowlands. The surrender to Louis was not made. The King of England used his fleet to help the French, as he had engaged, and his subjects so hated the Dutch that the drawn battles the Duke of York fought at sea were popular; but the French alliance was not so, and the raising of a military force terrified and angered the rich men in Parliament, who dreaded most of all to see the monarchy armed. Once more Charles put forward a demand for religious toleration, and once more was forced to give way to the clamour of his enemies.

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He thought to manœuvre skilfully by giving the Chancellorship—worth a quarter of a million a year in modern money—to the ablest, the most unscrupulous, and one of the wealthiest of them. This was Ashley Cooper, now Earl of Shaftesbury, a man over fifty years of age. He had made three wealthy marriages—one with the Cecils—and had committed treason all his life, beginning by taking a colonelcy from Charles I and then deserting to the rebels, abandoning Cromwell after having served on his Council, condemning his former associates to death after the Restoration. With such a record and such enormous wealth he was the most influential man in England. Charles's attempt to hold him by giving him office failed; he proceeded to show his power once more by betraying again, and joined the cry against toleration. Charles took away his quarter of a million a year by dismissing him in 1673, and thenceforward Shaftesbury was an open enemy, using all his great talents to undo the King.

He violently supported the Test Act, whereby no one could hold any office without denying the Real Presence in the Sacrament, and so deprived the Duke of York of the Admiralty and drove from Charles's side Clifford, the most loyal and patriotic and the bravest of his ministers. Peace was made with Holland; Charles got an honest landed gentleman from the North, Osborne (whom he made Lord Danby), to head his ministry, and he was also able to relieve the pressure by successfully proroguing Parliament for two years. A sudden expansion of trade, and therefore of customs revenue, came to his aid; Louis XIV also gave supplies, and Charles was for those few months independent of grants and therefore of his enemies. But as Louis became too exigent he countered by one of his regular strokes, and played the Dutch card again. He married—after some reluctance and not without much persuasion—his eldest niece, Mary, the Duke of York's eldest daughter, to her cousin, young Orange, the head of the Dutch state and one of the chiefs of the coalition which—now active, now passive—was forming against Louis's power.

This Protestant marriage, taking place at the end of 1677, looked as though it might secure the King, though it had angered Louis. But Shaftesbury and his fellow-conspirators were plotting ceaselessly, and they were soon to come very near to triumph and to upsetting the King.

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**The Popish Plot.** It is with the famous Popish Plot of 1678 as it is with the Gunpowder Plot. We cannot be certain (as we can of the Babington Plot in Elizabeth's reign) that it was engineered by others than its supposed authors. Shaftesbury may have started it and was believed on all sides to have done so; certainly he nourished it zealously once it appeared. But that he actually began it and that those who appeared in public were only his agents we have no documents to prove.

What happened was this. In the middle of August 1678 Charles was warned that there was a plot against his life. Titus Oates, a man of the vilest character, who had got himself into Jesuit colleges abroad and had been expelled from them, laid information of a vast plot, Jesuit in origin and supported by Catholics, to kill the King and establish Catholicism, after many other murders. He was examined by the Council and expanded his revelations. He swore to them before a magistrate, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, who was afterwards found dead, whether murdered or by suicide (October 7, 1678). The London public had already been roused to a pitch of violent excitement, as some one had engineered a widespread campaign, which must have been heavily financed. The discovery of Godfrey's body turned this excitement to madness. There arose an insane fury in which men would believe anything, and general massacre and the burning of the city were looked for.

In further depositions by Oates, to whom others were now added, the Queen was implicated, as plotting to kill Charles, and one witness was fully believed when he gave details of an armada of monks prepared to sail from Spain and put everything to fire and sword. Two thousand Catholics were soon in prison, and of the whole Catholic population in the capital 30,000—one-eighth of the city—who had held out and refused to deny their religion during the terror were driven out of London. The one shred of evidence cited in support of all this was a letter sent by Coleman, an associate of the Duke of York's, three years before to the famous French priest Père Lachaise, asking for a sum of money to help spread Catholicism in England and prophesying the ultimate conversion of the country. The trials of the accused spread over two and a half years, and resulted in many executions for treason, the most remarkable being that of William Howard, Lord

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Stafford, and the last that of Oliver Plunkett, Catholic Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland.

Charles, who knew the innocence of the accused and despised the lunacy of the day, had the weakness to prefer his constant policy of saving the Throne to plain justice. Reluctantly, and sometimes after long delay, he signed the death-warrants.

**The Exclusion Policy.** The efforts of Shaftesbury, now that he had the insane fury of more than half London and of much of the country to help him, turned on excluding the Duke of York from the throne. It was a master-stroke for destroying what remained of kingly authority in England, for, whether the Prince of Orange or the illegitimate Monmouth were to succeed Charles, either would be the puppet of the great fortunes which had set him up, while James was a man of bad judgment and inflexible will, and, unlike his brother, determined not only to save the mere name of monarchy, but to restore the thing itself.

Charles yielded everything but the actual right to succession in the lawful dynasty. He remodelled the Council, admitting Shaftesbury to it and actually making him its president. He had his brother go abroad, to Brussels. On May 22, 1679, the Bill for excluding James from the succession passed the Commons. Charles countered by proroguing Parliament and later dissolving it.

He was wrong in hoping that a new House of Commons would be less in the hands of the wealthy plotters with Shaftesbury at their head; the organization for controlling the mass of little boroughs was all on their side, and the King had none. He kept the new Parliament prorogued. Shaftesbury replied by organizing petitions for Parliament to meet, but a sudden unexpected spontaneous outburst of loyalty upset his calculations. A second Parliament was equally in Shaftesbury's hands, but that vast body of public opinion—even in the City—which was unrepresented in the restricted revolutionary organization was turning. The Lords had already thrown out the Exclusion Bill in the previous Parliament. The people were following Charles, and adhesions to the Royalist side came in a flood; the City magnates of the money power were changing. At the very end of 1682 Shaftesbury fled to Holland, and died at Amsterdam in the January of 1683. Charles had got rid of the politicians: he proceeded to get rid of the corrupt little

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municipal oligarchies, and found he had half London on his side. James, who on returning from Brussels had been sent to rule in Scotland for safety, returned. The King had staved off revolution and barely won; but there was one more card to play—assassination.

**The Plots.** Two plots, obscurely connected, arose: one to kill Charles as he passed the Rye House, near Hoddesdon, the other to make Monmouth a sort of king. The seat of this movement was Southampton House, in Bloomsbury, for the most important of the plotters, William Russell, Lord Bedford's heir, had married a fortune like to his own, the co-heiress of the vast Southampton wealth. The two chief Reformation fortunes, Russell and Wriothesley, were thus united; and the woman, somewhat older than her husband, was the soul of the conspiracy. By her mother she was a Ruvigny, and the "iron Huguenot blood" runs through all that story. Essex killed himself; the lesser conspirators were hanged at Tyburn; William Russell was reserved for the axe. Huge sums of money were offered for a reprieve, but Charles stood firm. "It is his life or mine," he said very truly, and Russell was duly beheaded on July 21, 1683. Monmouth, who should have suffered equally, was spared by his father's affection.

**The Death of the King.** On Monday, February 2, 1685, Charles, who had now for eighteen months enjoyed, for the first time in twenty years, some real security, fell feverish and then insensible. The populace, who loved him, heard of his danger, gathered round the palace, and were loud in their prayers. He suffered great agony, the worse for his physicians. On the Wednesday afternoon good Bishop Ken confessed and absolved him, and begged him to communicate in the Anglican rite. His failing voice said, "There is yet time." The Elements were left at the side of his bed. Long after it was dark, about eight o'clock, his brother asked him if he would see a priest, and, after much muttering, he whispered, "Yes, with all my heart." Those in the room were withdrawn a little apart. Father Huddleston, who had helped to save him in youth, came in with the Sacrament from the Queen's chapel, and Charles was received, begging in vain to be allowed to kneel. He lingered through the night in great pain, but was unconscious by mid-morning. At noon on Friday, February 6, 1685, he died.

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### THE REVOLUTION

The period 1685-89 covers the *effective* reign of James II. That is, it begins at the moment when Charles II, his brother, died, and ends at the moment when the Dutch seized the royal palace in London. It falls into four unequal parts. (1) *The rebellions*: these and their immediate effects are over in nine months—by November 1685. (2) *The last attempt at religious tolerance*: lasting two years, from the Parliament of November 1685 to the pregnancy of the Queen, about December 1687. (3) *The expectation of an heir*: some six months, from December 1687 to the birth of James III on June 10, 1688. (4) *The Dutch invasion*: six months, from the birth of James III to the capture of Whitehall by the Dutch on December 17, 1688.

**James's Quiet Accession.** James succeeded peaceably. Even the wealthier merchants of London took his position for granted, and the people of the capital followed suit. He made a speech to the Council, which was printed and distributed, saying that he would support the Church and state as he found them, and immediately summoned a Parliament to meet in three months, on May 19. He put his brother-in-law, Lord Rochester, a strong Protestant and supporter of the Church of England, at the head of the Government, and kept Sunderland as Secretary to the Council.

Two points of importance arose at this opening of his reign: (1) the maintenance of the revenue to carry on the public services until Parliament should meet; (2) the attitude of the Government towards the Catholics.

**James assumes his Due Revenue.** The first was settled on common-sense lines. The revenue granted to the King—that is, the Government—for carrying on the affairs of the nation had been voted not for the continuation of one Parliament, nor to the monarch of the day, but to Charles II as a person. At his death it lapsed. But the Army, Navy, etc., could not be maintained out of nothing, and therefore until the Parliament met all the customs and half the excise were paid into the Treasury, the great merchants who were the principal payers cordially agreeing.

**The Catholic Question :** (a) **James's Personal Position ;** (b) **Toleration of Catholics as a Whole.** The Catholic question was more difficult. It had two parts: first, what the King

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himself should do in the way of worship, and, secondly, how far Catholics should be allowed to act as citizens and to follow their religion without hindrance.

As to the first, James's subjects objected to his Catholic Faith, not to his private worship; but they hated any public expression of it—even within the palace. James, who hated intrigue, went to Mass in the Queen's chapel as an individual rather than as a monarch. But he insisted on the ceremony due to a monarch, and was accompanied to the door of the chapel by the great officers of the court. This ceremony gave rise to violent sermons in the city of London; it was sincerely though erroneously feared by many, and with deliberate falsehood adduced by others, that he intended an attack on the state religion.

In the matter of toleration he released the thousands of Catholics who were in prison for their faith and also the lesser number of Nonconformists. But he went no farther, except to warn the lawyers that the Government discouraged prosecutions on grounds of religion. Any further action towards toleration of Catholics and Nonconformists alike he put off to the assembly of Parliament.

On St George's Day, April 23, 1685, James was crowned and anointed in Westminster Abbey according to the rites of the Church of England. There followed the trial of Titus Oates, which the death of Charles II had postponed. His guilt was clearly established, and the judges, in condemning him to a very heavy fine, flogging, and the pillory, expressed regret that they could not hang him. On May 19 Parliament met.

By way of an opening speech James reread the declaration he had made to the Council on his accession, promising to support Church and state as he found them. He asked of them the regular revenue of half excise and all customs for life, which his brother had had, and some further special vote to meet Charles II's debts and the expenses of putting down a rebellion which Argyll had begun (of which more in a moment).

The Parliament were enthusiastic in his support; they cheered the speech continually, willingly granted the revenue for life, and gave him for the moment a special revenue more than he had asked. A motion to persecute Dissenters was rejected unanimously on account of the King's desire for tolerance.

So far as the Commons and the people and merchants of

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London were concerned, the support of the King in his coming difficulty of the rebellions was strong, sincere, and united. The rebellions, which were also invasions, were planned for Scotland and for the south by Argyll and Monmouth in Holland. The Dutch connived at their departure.

**The Rebellions.** Argyll sailed from Holland on May 2, 1685, landed on the west coast of Scotland, and issued a proclamation against King James. He had little following, himself being captured on June 17, and his last hundred men dispersed. He was executed on the 30th at Edinburgh, showing great firmness to the end.

Monmouth delayed; he could only scrape together a force of eighty in one ship, but he counted on some measure of popular support in the West, and he carried arms for five thousand. He landed at Lyme Regis on June 11. He issued a proclamation that he was come to defend the Protestant religion, laws and liberties of England, denounced James (whom he called Duke of York) as a usurper, accused him of poisoning Charles II (Monmouth's father), of setting fire to London, of idolatry and other extravagances, and declared war on him. And he also angled for support by promising to tolerate Protestant Dissenters.

In four days he raised 3000 men, but they were as yet untrained and of little value—in an outpost affair at Bridport even the local militia had shown themselves superior to a rebel levy. He declared himself King (under the title of James II), ordered the dissolution of Parliament, and set a price on the head of the real James II.

Besides the local bodies of militia the King had only three Scottish regiments and 5000 regulars all told. Many of them were needed for garrisons, especially in London. He sent Lord Feversham with orders to hold Bristol, but to refuse battle.

Monmouth hesitated. He went slowly from one market-town to another, heard at Frome on June 27 of Argyll's failure, and became anxious. In a secret council of his officers he proposed to desert his army, reach the nearest coast, and fly back overseas. At Bridgwater on Sunday, July 5, he heard that Feversham had marched out of Bristol, passed Somerton with his little force of some few thousand men (including a few good cavalry and less militia), and was lying with the horse at Weston, while his infantry stood in front of villages at the edge of the

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great swamp called Sedgemoor. Monmouth determined to surprise the royal army that night, marched out by the causeway across Sedgemoor through a dense mist, and came on the royal infantry in the early hours of the Monday morning, July 6, before it was light. The little armies were much of the same size, each more or less 3000 men; but Feversham's force were mainly regulars, a difference which decided the issue. And with it was John Churchill, who had risen through the fact that his sister was the King's mistress, and that he had obtained money from a rich woman with whom he lived.

**The 'Battle' of Sedgemoor.** There was no real battle. The rebels tried in the darkness to force a dyke covering the royalist infantry and failed. Their leading cavalry fled at the first shots, sabring their own foot-soldiers in their panic; the rest of the horse advanced, but failed again, and the whole scratch body was subject to the desultory fire of the royal cannon in the darkness. At dawn Feversham's cavalry was seen drawn up on the right of Monmouth's force; his infantry immediately crossed the ditch, and, as they engaged, his horse charged in flank and all was over. Five hundred rebels, mostly miners from the Mendip, were found dead on the field, others were cut down in the pursuit, 1500 were taken prisoner.

Monmouth had fled at the very beginning of the affair, making his way in disguise towards the New Forest, and was caught on July 7. He wrote a piteous appeal for his life to the King. On his arrival in London a week later James consented to his earnest appeal to see him, but was disgusted by his cowardice. He knelt and crawled upon the floor, imploring mercy and denouncing all his comrades in arms. At ten o'clock on July 15 he was beheaded, with shocking indecision, on Tower Hill. His last words affirmed the rights of his mistress as against his wife and his assurance that he was going to heaven.

Of the rebels found in arms a small minority were given over to military execution at the hands of one Kirke, formerly in command at Tangiers, a man whose vileness is sufficiently proved by his desertion from the flag a few years later, his relations with William of Orange, and his cruelty in Ireland. His action did not exceed the severities common to the time, but they disgusted the King sufficiently for him to call a halt and to submit the authors, aiders, and participators in the rebellion to the regular courts. Five judges were sent into the West to try

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the vast number of criminals presented; at their head was Jeffreys. They first sat at Winchester, where the old widow of one of Cromwell's regicides was condemned by the jury on overwhelming evidence of trying to hide notorious rebels; but James commuted her sentence from burning, the legal punishment, to beheading. The judges proceeded through the West as far as Exeter and back to Wells. Of the many thousand presented most were acquitted, pardoned, or received a sentence of flogging or short imprisonment. Between 1100 and 1200 were more severely dealt with, principally as being guilty of rebellion in arms. Of these only just over a quarter suffered the full penalty;<sup>1</sup> the remaining three-quarters were given sentences of ten years' transportation to labour in the plantations.

**The Attempt at Religious Toleration.** With the end of the summer the rebellions had been crushed and punished, and the adjourned Parliament met again in November.

It was the prime object of James II to obtain, with its aid, an England in which the various forces of the nation should combine in support of the Government and a general tranquillity under a popular monarchy.

*Against* this object stood the following forces:

(1) The first force, much the strongest, was the wealthier class as a whole, including the great merchants, especially those of London.

(2) Supporting this against a Catholic King was the anti-Catholic feeling of the nation. This feeling had grown steadily in the eighty years since the Gunpowder Plot; much the larger part of England in number was by this time Protestant in life and anti-Catholic in policy. A large minority or perhaps nearly half was strongly anti-Catholic, and in London the proportion was much higher. A lesser minority—but still a large one—perhaps a third—would extirpate the Catholic religion by whatever means and wherever it was found, but especially in England. Only a small minority, from a seventh to an eighth perhaps, was actively Catholic; but it varied very much with persecution, and the Catholics who would make sacrifices to maintain their religion and hand it on to their children were perhaps not one in ten of the whole people. More than a fifth might be Catholic-minded more or less—counting in those of vague

<sup>1</sup> The number would seem to be 331; and we have an index in the case of Dorchester—292 condemned to death, only 74 actually executed.

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Catholic tradition—but many of these had become largely indifferent.

(3) The national feeling, covering nearly all the nation and including many active Catholics, was irritated by the great strength of Louis XIV and the French nation, for the moment much the strongest power in the west of Europe. Now, this national rival (*a*) stood for Catholicism (though at some issue with the Pope), and (*b*) stood everywhere for popular monarchy as against government by the wealthier classes. Therefore, in reaction against it the national feeling in England tended to suspect popular monarchy and to support the growing power of the wealthier classes here, and even, in part, to sympathize with the similar power of the rich in Holland, at whose head was William of Orange, James II's Protestant son-in-law, the opponent of Louis XIV.

(4) A further cause of weakness was the fact that, while James's main object was general toleration and peace under the popular monarchy of his house, he himself was a convinced Catholic, so that (*a*) he necessarily thought first of his co-religionists in trying to secure freedom of worship, and (*b*) all his acts would be interpreted as supporting Catholicism.

*In favour* of James's attempt at tranquil government under a popular monarchy were:

(1) The devotion of the English to their traditions.

(2) The effect of time. He was fifty-two; if he lived for, say, twenty years more, toleration might well take root.

(3) The fact that James had no son. The succession to the crown lay in his daughters Mary and Anne—both strong Protestants and married to Protestant husbands—Mary to William of Orange, the Dutchman, head of the opposition to Louis XIV abroad, and Anne to Prince George of Denmark. And this persuaded the anti-Catholics to wait.

Under such conditions did James II begin his great experiment. His policy had three parts:

(1) (the essential). To repeal the Test Acts, which prevented anyone from holding a post, civil or military, or voting in Parliament, unless he took communion as a member of the Church of England and swore an oath denying the presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

(2) The forming of a small army, some 15,000 men, to act in defence of the Government.

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(3) The modification of the Habeas Corpus Act. This Act still survives as an historical curiosity, but is now of little effect, because a modern Government can suspend it at will and can secure, even without its suspension, the imprisonment of undesirables, since the Justiciary is now part of a united class which has taken the place of personal kingship. But in Charles II's and James II's time Habeas Corpus was a powerful weapon against the government of the King and intended to be used as such. For, though the King could usually rely on some judges, he could never be certain of all (as a modern Government is). The lawyers had become, in the seventeenth century, part of that wealthy class which is to-day the executive, but was then in opposition to the executive. Now, since any judge was free under the Act, in the pretence that the Government's plea for delay did not satisfy him, to say that a prisoner should no longer be detained pending trial, the lawyers could thus hamper the Government's collection of evidence.

James was opposed in his own Council by Halifax and Rochester. The Test Act was the real battle-ground, and support of it was increased by the news, in October, that the King of France had abolished the edict of long standing which gave freedom of worship and civic rights to French Protestants. Of these some 4000 emigrated to England, and, though a small body, greatly inflamed public feeling.

Parliament met on November 9. It opposed. It supported the Test Act in the House of Commons, refusing to continue the commissions given to certain Catholic officers who had acted against the late rebels. In the House of Lords the bishops were unanimously determined to maintain the civic disabilities of all Catholic Englishmen.

The King prorogued the Parliament and determined to act in favour of toleration through his *dispensing power*. The dispensing power was the right of the King to relieve particular cases from the action of a general law—*e.g.*, he could pardon even a convicted felon. There had never been any question of this constitutional principle—it was immemorial and taken for granted; but because the relief now offered would give civic rights to a Catholic, the judges, whose support of any form of government is essential, began to waver. A minority of four proclaimed the novel doctrine that the King could not give a particular dispensation. This revolutionary act on the part of

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such important members of the new oligarchy was the signal for all that was to follow. Just as the wavering of the judges between the rich and Charles I had been a sign that the House of Commons was then winning against the monarchy, so the wavering of the judges now showed that the last remnant of kingly power was in danger.

The four revolutionary judges were removed, and a test case was tried: Sir Edward Hales was a colonel in the Army—could he remain in that office without publicly and solemnly denying the Real Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and accepting Protestant Communion, the essence of the Test Act? The Lord Chief Justice, Herbert, the most respected figure on the Bench, held that he could remain an officer without apostasy, as the King had given special dispensation. But he urged the gravity of the case and called in all his colleagues. All save one concurred.

The King's dispensary power in favour of toleration was thus declared legal, and James could and did use it in strict conformity with law. But the law was unpopular, especially in London and wherever the hatred of Catholicism was strong.

**Compton, Bishop of London, suspended.** Compton, a member of the Reformation aristocracy, had been made Bishop of London by James's special favour during his brother's reign. Yet he had been specially prominent in attacking the King in the House of Lords. Violent sermons were preached in London inciting the Protestant majority to the hatred of the Catholics in their midst. James, though the head of the Church, thought that his position as a Catholic forbade him to interfere with the discipline of the Church of England. He left it to an ecclesiastical commission, all Protestant and Churchmen—the Primate (who excused himself on the ground of age), the Bishops of Durham and Rochester, three Lords of Council, and the Chief Justice of Common Pleas. On September 6, 1686, they suspended Compton.

**James attempts to impose Toleration upon the Universities (1686 and early 1687).** Meanwhile the universities, essential parts and supports of the new aristocracy and of the Church of England, were resolute against toleration. James was as resolute in imposing that policy upon them. He maintained in their Fellowships Walker, the Master of University College, Oxford, who had become Catholic, and three others,

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a tiny proportion out of the whole body of the university—but a test of toleration. But (early in the next year) he failed in a more important point: Cambridge refused (in spite of the King's orders) to grant a Catholic his degree (one Francis, a Benedictine) unless he repudiated the Sacrament of the Altar, and James admitted defeat.

**James Acts Unwisely.** So far James II's policy had been consistent and even wise—though it would have required a very skilful hand to maintain it. But James, who was as unskilful as he was straightforward and sincere, blundered enormously in two capital points—(1) the distinction between toleration and encroachment; (2) the distinction between his religion as an individual and his office as a King.

As to (1), he maintained the handful of Catholic Fellows of the university in their ecclesiastical emoluments. That was an encroachment upon the property and domestic affairs of the Church of England, which he had sworn to maintain. He even in one case allowed a parish clergyman (Sclater, of Putney) to keep his ecclesiastical revenue after conversion, on condition that he paid a substitute. He imposed a convert, Massey, of Merton, on Christ Church as its Dean, an invasion of the Protestant and established ecclesiastical hierarchy.

As to (2), he published arguments in favour of Catholicism found among Charles II's papers in Charles II's own hand, he added to the Council a disproportionate number of Catholic peers (four), and he attempted the conversion of his chief minister and brother-in-law, Rochester. On that peer's refusal he dismissed him—with a large income out of the royal purse and more from the forfeit lands of the rebel Lord Grey.

**The Position of Sunderland.** Two men had fought for supremacy in the Council which directly ruled England—Rochester and Sunderland. When Rochester fell Sunderland was supreme, and this man, mainly through love of intrigue and power, partly to shield himself in case of disaster, gave James advice unfailingly bad and ultimately ruinous. It was he who insisted on Father Petre, a Jesuit, being taken secretly into the Council. He ultimately professed himself a convert—of doubtful sincerity. He probably thought that James would succeed in his policy, but he hedged by keeping in touch with James's enemies, the exiles in Holland. It is a proof of James's own lack of judgment that he relied upon such a man.

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**The Errors of 1687.** Rochester had been dismissed at the very end of 1686. By the turn of the year, in early 1687, James was opposed by a growing national feeling. It was the moment to draw back and temporize: he went forward. Thus it was consistent that he should allow Catholics to worship in public—but the Mass so said was intolerable to the large minority of fanatics and irritating to the great Protestant majority of London. If Catholicism was to be tolerated it was just that a few of the religious here and there should have houses and their chapels in London, but at such a moment it inflamed opinion. His attempt to impose a head upon one of the Oxford colleges was also impolitic at the moment. He was well within his rights when he burned a libel by one Claude, a French refugee, on Louis XIV, but he did it at a moment when the falsehood of his subservience to France (the one thing he was trying to avoid!) was being spread by his enemies. He had raised a regular force of more than 13,000, less than 16,000 men, quartered in a camp on Hounslow Heath, and in this he acted as any Government must act if it is to exist; but he exaggerated its parades and his visits to it, he favoured a public Mass in Lord Castlemaine's tent, as many of the soldiers were Catholic, and he punished a minister of the Church of England, one Johnson, for circulating a tract inciting the Army to mutiny. All this would have been just and normal in normal times, but was provocative in a time of crisis.

Opposition had thus been strengthened when James proceeded to the main act of his reign—at the critical date when it would arouse the greatest resistance.

**The Declaration of Indulgence (April 4, 1687).** On April 4, 1687, James II published his famous proclamation establishing equality of all before the law, irrespective of creed, known as the Declaration of Indulgence. By this act, modelled on a parallel already established in Scotland, all offices were thrown open to Dissenters and Catholics alike, all persecution of opinion under the old criminal statutes was forbidden. The active Dissenters—a minority of the people—were delighted and hastened to express their gratitude. But the stumbling-block was the freedom of the old religion. Popular imagination will construct anything in moments of exasperation, and the idea took root that a plot was on foot to compel by force a change in the religion of the English. To-day we smile at such folly,

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but its effect was very real—and in many text-books still endures. It was believed that in some magic way a Protestant country was to be compelled by force to Catholicism. Henceforward any attempt at confirming toleration was called tyranny by James's enemies.

### **The Attempt to turn the Proclamation into Law fails.**

An order in council, a proclamation, was a legitimate way of governing in an interval: it had been so for centuries: it is still. But it is provisional. To be permanent it must be confirmed in a statute—that is, an act of the King in Parliament assembled. James had said as much in his declaration, and proceeded to the summoning of a Parliament which should make law this piece of justice. He pointed out that the safeguards were ample. Only Protestants could sit in the House of Commons; in the Lords the Catholics were no more in proportion than in the mass of the nation—one-eighth. The Catholic minority in the realm could never be a menace to the great majority. Their freedom was of right and common sense. He sent round to procure a new House of Commons that should agree to such obvious justice. He was disappointed. The wealthier burgesses who controlled the town corporations and the mass of the squires opposed toleration from their hearts. Half the peers who, as Lord-Lieutenants of counties, had been asked to give a list of Catholics and Dissenters fit to stand as candidates for the shires resigned. It was clear that no new House of Commons would make toleration law. But even more important as a force against James than the hatred of his religion was the determination of the wealthier classes to have done with monarchy, and to put in the place of the last Stuart a creature of their own. Such an one stood ready to hand in the person of the King's Dutch son-in-law, William of Orange.

**Support of James in Face of Opposition. The Protestant Succession seems Secure.** Active though secret intrigue had begun to bring in the Prince of Orange, yet the feeling for the Throne and the reigning house was as much a part of general English feeling as was Protestantism. In such an atmosphere of dynastic loyalty James could still defy the intriguers, because the succession to the crown was clearly Protestant. Of his two daughters Mary, the eldest, was married to William of Orange, the Protestant champion. When her turn came all would be well. She was childless, but her sister Anne was as Protestant

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as she. The future seemed secure, for James had no son by his Catholic second wife, Mary of Modena—whom many believed to be incapable of bearing children after her last illness. The opposition could afford to wait. So things stood when, in December 1687, it was rumoured, then confirmed, that the Queen would bear a child.

**The Expectation of an Heir.** All things changed. The child that was to be born might be a boy, and if it were the immediate succession of Mary, with William of Orange at her side, would be certainly long deferred and most probably debarred altogether. The great hopes of the oligarchy were imperilled.

A campaign of falsehood began at once, malign and utterly unscrupulous. The Queen's pregnancy was denied in pamphlet and story; the people were filled with an absurd lie that the whole thing was a plot to prepare in due time for the substitution of some other man's son as the King's. It is good proof of the depth of weakness to which the English monarchy had fallen that such demonstrable lies<sup>1</sup> could not be checked or their authors punished.

James was not aware of the vast change which the expectation of an heir, to the exclusion of William and Mary, had made. It sounds incredible, but it is true. He chose the moment when the tide was rising highest to commit the chief blunder of his reign.

**Order for the Declaration of Indulgence to be read in the Churches.** The great Edict of Toleration had been out a year. He republished it on April 25, 1688, with a preamble in defence of civic appeasement and religious liberty for all, telling the people what they might make of a united England, and added that it would certainly be confirmed and made law by Parliament when it should meet in the autumn. But ten days later, on May 4, he and the Council issued an order to the bishops that the arguments for toleration and the edict itself should be read from the pulpit of every church in London a fortnight later (on Sunday, the 20th), and at every country church on the Sunday after, the 27th, and the two following. The King's object was the thorough publication of the document to all, a thing only to be effected in those days by the reading of it in all the churches; but his effort was a direct challenge

<sup>1</sup> Of these Burnet, whom William later made Bishop of Salisbury, was the most zealous propagator.

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to the clergy of the Church of England as individuals. For most of them rejected the idea of toleration, and a large minority (in London certainly a great majority) hated the idea of freedom for Catholics as strongly as they hated Catholicism itself: the two ideas were identical in their minds.

**Compton's Plot (May 10-18).** The political opportunity which this blunder afforded was immediately seized, and used with great skill. Sancroft, the Primate, secretly summoned the suspended Compton, Bishop of London (the soul of the affair), Turner of Ely, and White of Peterborough. They drew up a resolution against obeying the order. Not a word of this was allowed to reach the King. Seven others were called in whom Compton personally could count on: only four came—St Asaph, Bath and Wells, Chichester, and Bristol. A memorial was drawn up in the name of the Primate Sancroft asking for the clergy to be excused on the political (and false) ground that the dispensing power was illegal. They signed this document, which was duly presented to the King on Friday *night*, May 18, as an ultimatum—the calculation being that it would then be too late for discussion as the order was for the following Sunday morning, and that James would have to refuse point-blank or else capitulate. In point of fact, late as was the hour, the King tried to negotiate. He bade Compton's seven bishops return the next day, when he should have considered his answer. But the scheme devised against him was cleverer than he knew. The Bishop's memorial had long been set up in type and printed without the King's knowledge. By way of forcing his hand the confidential document on which he was deliberating was, to his amazement and disgust, published broadcast throughout London on the Saturday. Therefore, on that day which he had probably designed for a reconciliation, he was silent. The Declaration of Indulgence was read in only a few London churches on the Sunday morning.

**The Seven Bishops are committed.** The Council were divided as to what they should do. Sunderland and even Petre thought it wiser to accept the rebuff rather than provoke a conflict. Other bishops meanwhile signed Compton's memorial. The original seven signatories were summoned to appear before the Council on Friday, June 8, and on the 7th it was agreed by Sancroft that, to avoid embittering the quarrel, they should not ask for imprisonment awaiting trial, but should give their

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recognizances for coming up for trial. When they came before the Council, where they were received with dignity, old Sancroft (he had been got at in the meanwhile by the politicians who were manœuvring in the background against the King) was made to break his word and to refuse recognizances. There was thus no choice but to keep the Bishops in custody pending trial, but it was of a most honourable sort—they were given complete freedom in the Tower, and that very evening met at evensong.

By this time the determining opinion in London was at fever-heat, and the Bishops were its heroes. No one troubled about the exact point at issue; the broad division was between toleration of the Catholics and their suppression. Vast crowds watched from the banks of the river the Bishops' progress to the Tower, and cheered them all the way.

**The Birth of James's Son (June 10, 1688), and the Consequent Policy of Orange.** All this was on Friday, June 8. On Sunday, the 10th, the Queen's child was born; and it was a son.

William of Orange had been informed that the Queen's child would be born in July. Such had been the Queen's own judgment, and it was reiterated by all those in her confidence. From the moment a child was expected he had determined to await the issue, and if it were a son to try his fortunes at war. His plans were thrown into complete disorder by the antedating of the birth by a full month. He sent his Dutchman Zuylestein to James to convey his most emphatic congratulations on the birth of an heir, and began his new preparations to supplant the child.

No group of men in history were so steeped in falsehood as the conspirators against James II. Zuylestein, after he had left William's false message with James on June 23, made visits to the greater gentry who had determined on destroying the remnant of the English monarchy. These had met in every sort of secret gathering here and there since the birth of the child. On June 30, just a week after Zuylestein's leaving the court, he met seven of the boldest and—probably at his instigation, but with Compton an ardent second—they signed a cipher letter to William inviting him to come over. Shrewsbury, Compton, Danby, Devonshire, Russell, the renegade Lumley, and Sidney (in whose handwriting the document was drawn up) set their names.

The letter warned the Dutch Prince to do all in great secrecy

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and to bring over an ample foreign force. But where the conspirators could speak with authority and were absolutely right was in their affirmation that at the first proof of the invader's strength the wealthier gentry—of which they were examples—would desert what was left of kingship. Admiral Herbert almost certainly took the letter over to Holland. He deserted his post, and joined the foreign Government at a substantial salary as a naval commander over the Dutch sailors.

**The Trial of the Bishops.** The trial of the Seven Bishops began on June 29 and occupied two days, ending on the 30th. It was made to turn on the dispensing power of the Crown. The judges were divided. The jury acquitted, and a popular demonstration, spreading to part of the Army, acclaimed the verdict. The plot had thoroughly succeeded. James had been forced, by the intentional delay in the protest, and by its premature publication behind his back, into a position where his wealthy opponents, now so much stronger than the monarchy, held all the trumps. Either he must accept the rebellion of the plotters, and thus admit the last revolutionary doctrine against the Crown, or he must bring them to trial. Once brought to trial, either acquittal or condemnation was fatal to him—the former through popular rejoicing that the enemies of toleration had won, the latter through popular anger against their failure.

**William's Policy.** What we have now to follow is the series of intrigues and treasons which ended with the Dutch invasion and the capture of the palace by foreign troops.

William of Orange had prepared to interfere at the birth of the child if it should prove a son, which he expected in July. We have seen how his plans were broken up by the birth of the Prince of Wales taking place a month earlier, on June 10. The letter inviting him to invade in due season, written by the plotters under their ringleader, Compton, the Bishop of London, was before him in a week. To bring his foreign army into England William of Orange (financed by Dutch money to be repaid with interest out of the pockets of the English taxpayers) had now to consider the situation on the Continent and to manœuvre for success in spite of several conflicting obstacles. There had already been formed two years before, in 1686, the League of Augsburg against the great power of Louis XIV of France. It was not a Protestant alliance; it was an anti-French alliance, actively helped by the Pope, who feared the Gallican

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policy of the French King, and originally including the Catholic King of Spain and the Catholic Emperor.

William did not *chiefly* now (June 1688) desire to reduce Louis's power, much as he desired that end. He *chiefly* desired to usurp the throne of England, the reversion to which through his wife was now lost through the birth of a Prince. He had to deceive (1) his Catholic allies against Louis and (2) the people of England, most of whom disliked James's policy of religious toleration, but loathed the idea of a Dutch monarch. He had also to get the Dutch Government (of which he was not master, though its most important subject) to lend him ships, men, and money for the enterprise. Now, the Dutch were chiefly concerned with the preventing of an attack on their territory by Louis XIV. They had put 20,000 men on their borders, and would certainly spare nobody for the sideshow of William's invasion so long as Louis's great forces stood ready to move *either* against them *or* against the Rhine: no one knew which direction Louis would take—though the Dutch were nominally at peace, so far, with the French.

**James rejects the Aid of France.** All that summer (July and August) Louis kept warning James of William's duplicity and intended invasion, and he offered the support of the French fleet. But James's object was by toleration at home and a strong fleet, coupled with the avoidance of any entanglement with France, to make England as strong and independent as possible.

William told his Catholic allies the falsehood that he had no intention of dethroning the Catholic King of England. His agents repeated that falsehood to the English. But so long as Louis's movements were uncertain William would be lent neither money, ships, nor men by the Dutch: he was hung up.

On September 1, 1688, Louis declared to the Dutch that if a move was made against James the Dutch must expect an attack from himself. This declaration checkmated William and nearly saved James. But James repudiated the proffered aid, because it made the Crown of England seem dependent; it made him look, in the eyes of his Protestant subjects, a hanger-on of a Catholic power, and he would have none of it. He publicly repudiated Louis's friendship, said he could trust to the loyalty of his own daughter and her husband and to the solemn promises of the Dutch Government. He recalled his Ambassador to Paris to mark his disapproval of so anti-national an alliance as that

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diplomat had advised. The action was patriotic, sincere, and proud—but in the face of such forces as were then massed against James it was fatal. It was the act of a truthful and open man, but of one limited and incapable of discovering an intrigue—and it was his ruin.

Louis gave him up as hopeless, promised the Dutch that he would not attack them, and turned his great armies off towards the Rhine.

That was on September 24, and from that moment James was lost. The Dutch Government, the pressure on their frontiers thus removed, consented to William's secret scheme.

James woke up, too late, to his danger. He prepared to compromise with the great conspiracy against him. He did not go so far as to forbid religious freedom or, as the bishops now suggested he should, abandon his Faith. But he reversed his former action in the universities, he restored the old town franchises—with their corporations of wealthy burgesses opposed to toleration. He offered the Dutch a formal alliance. He was still in part deceived. The peers who were intriguing with William swore to their deep loyalty to James; the bishops—three of whom were now secretly bound to William—prayed publicly and loudly for James.

On October 14 William renewed his oath to his Catholic allies. He swore that he had no intention of dethroning his father-in-law and would, on reaching England, *do all he could for the freedom of the Catholics*. The Dutch Government solemnly confirmed the falsehood, and so, on October 19, William sailed.

**Invasion.** A gale blew back the great Dutch fleet, with its mercenary troops in the transports; it was wind-bound for a fortnight. On November 1 the wind went easterly, and it sailed again. Making northward, as though for Yorkshire, it went about in the night, and passed the Straits of Dover on the 2nd (the British fleet at the mouth of the Thames could not beat up against the strong breeze to attack). And on November 5 William landed at Torbay, in Devon, with his 16,000 foreign men—French, Dutch, and German mercenaries, mainly officered by French Protestant gentlemen—and moved inland. He was ill-received. The populace saw the foreigners go through; they received the pamphlets which Bishop Burnet had drawn up denying the royal parentage of the new heir; they listened to the protestations and read the banners proclaiming "Religion

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and Liberty"—but they hated the foreigners, and they stood aside. William, sullen, disappointed, and alarmed, proposed to abandon the attempt within the first week. What saved him was Churchill's treason. On the eve of William's landing the plotters in London still carried on their deceit. The bishops especially lied boldly, swearing their deep loyalty to the King. Sancroft assured him no bishop had arranged with William; Compton affirmed himself as innocent as his colleagues: thus James still hoped.

**Churchill's Treason decides the Issue.** James had 40,000 men, very well trained, but all depended upon the officers. These of necessity came from that wealthy class which was determined to rule and to destroy the King. Churchill, with the rank of lieutenant-general, was the ablest. On November 16 he swore a special and peculiar loyalty to James and went off to organize the betrayal. He sent to Salisbury, as though to oppose the Dutch, three regiments of cavalry whose commanders were in the plot. They deserted and tried to bring over the rank and file, who, to their honour, for the most part refused: less than two hundred followed their leaders into William's camp. Churchill next, on November 22, tried to push James right at the front in Warminster, with the object perhaps of having him killed, certainly of putting him bodily into William's power. James decided to fall back on London; Churchill pressed him hard to remain, and, finding him determined, went over to the enemy on the 23rd. Even William expressed a measure of disgust.

After Churchill's desertion James was next deserted by his own daughter Anne (who was wholly under the influence of Churchill's wife), and the King, reaching London at the end of the month, was already almost certain that the end had come. He issued writs for a Parliament to meet, but prepared for the flight of his wife and child. After a failure at sending them abroad through Portsmouth he got them off down the Thames on December 10, and within forty-eight hours followed himself, throwing the Great Seal into the river as he went. His boat grounded at Sheerness; men in the pay of his enemies held him awhile. Then he set back for London.

London was divided. A mob inflamed by pamphlets had rioted, sacked Catholic chapels, attacked individuals, and looted, as the Dutch approached the capital; but on James's re-entry

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into the city he had a triumphal reception full of general and enthusiastic loyalty—for he was the King: and with the populace the tradition or ghost of national monarchy was still strong and the foreigner detested. The King reached Whitehall through a great mass of cheering men and women, and thought—for a moment perhaps—that he was restored.

This was on December 16. On the next day, the 17th, the aged commander of James's small English guard heard Dutch words of command at the gate, and was summoned to surrender. He proposed to die fighting. James refused the sacrifice. The Dutch soldiers marched into the royal palace of the English kings, and James lay down that night a prisoner. In the early hours of the 17th he rose and fled, this time with success. He reached the French coast on the 19th, a fugitive; the last of the national kings of England.

In all this story of the death of monarchy in England we have emphasized the power of increasing wealth on the side of the victorious landowners, of increasing poverty on that of the Crown. But from the early seventeenth century another form of financial pressure was ruining kingship—namely, usury. From James I's mid-reign onward continual indebtedness to goldsmiths, who later became bankers—indebtedness at 8 per cent. and more—sucked dry the veins of monarchy till it perished.

## XII

# ARISTOCRATIC ENGLAND

### THE NEW ENGLAND

*England becomes Unitedly Protestant under an Unchallenged Aristocratic Government and proceeds to increase, at first slowly, but uninterruptedly, in Numbers, Wealth, and Dominion*

**The Settlement.** The victory of the wealthier classes over the Crown, now finally and decisively won, was solemnly registered by what is called the Revolutionary Settlement. The phrase is sometimes used in the narrower sense of the later settlement of the crown and succession after Anne. In its general sense it signifies the confirmation of a great change which was now accomplished. One of its instruments was the Bill of Rights, putting into statutory form the principles of the earlier Declaration of Rights. It was a document recapitulating all the points by which transference from popular monarchy to government by the landed class and the squires was effected: no revenue save by imposition of the governing class in Parliament; no power of imprisonment save by the same class acting as local magistrates or lawyers; no mitigation of existing laws, especially laws of religious persecution, save by leave of the same authority; no standing army save by leave of the same authority; and so on. There was added the barring of the throne to Catholics by demanding a declaration against the Real Presence. All this was passed on December 16, 1689.

As there was no effective kingship left, this mere recital of the defunct powers of kingship has no importance save as a record of the victory that had been won.

**Aristocratic Government.** There arose from this victory what had been maturing for a long time, and was now perfect: the Aristocratic State. England became a country governed by an 'upper class'—that is, an aristocracy. England remained from 1689 to recent times the great modern example of that rare and very strong form of polity.

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Aristocratic government means government by a limited class—in general, the wealthiest class, *which class is revered by its fellow-citizens*. Aristocracy is from below. Its strength lies in the desire of the governed to be governed in this fashion: by what we now call 'a gentry.'

The examples of such states in history are rare, but when they arise they are most powerful and long-lived. In antiquity there was Carthage; in the Middle Ages there was Venice. It is to be remarked in the case of these, as of aristocratic England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that they were commercial and maritime. A maritime commercial state lends itself naturally to aristocratic government. The commercial spirit breeds a respect for wealth, and perpetually renews the governing class by digesting into it new wealth and gradually excluding from it families which lose their wealth.

At the same time the worship of wealth makes it natural for the worshippers to obey the wealthy; and not only to obey, but to revere them. Thus a fixed peasantry and well-divided property in any form destroys aristocratic government; but the dispossession of the small owner and the turning of him into the hired servant of wealth supports and nourishes aristocratic government. As the commercial character, so the maritime character of a state supports aristocratic government; for wealth increases through commerce overseas, which means naval power to defend trade routes, and the possession of strongholds and dominions on islands or peninsulas or cut off by desert or mountain, so that they cannot be attacked from the land.

Aristocracy breeds unity in the state. This was the great historical surprise of the eighteenth century. Intelligent men had taken it for granted in the mid-seventeenth that unity could only be preserved by strong monarchical central government. That was why men like Strafford had abandoned their class and supported the King. All the examples of strong united government presented to men's eyes in large states had been great popular monarchies, of which that of Louis XIV in France was the supreme type. Those rich men who had instinctively conspired to despoil kingship—men like the millionaire Hampden and his cousin Cromwell—could only admit that they would forgo the advantages of unity and excuse the risks to the nation by appealing to theory, calling themselves 'the people,' and pointing out that in abstract morals 'the people' have a right

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to rule. But now it was found that in practice aristocracy made men more united than any other form of government. Under it England became more and more one thing, and after six generations of it is like a block of granite. This English unity was consolidated by the driving out of Catholicism. The remnant of what had been the old national religion went to pieces after 1688. A Catholic gentleman practising his religion in that year had the active sympathy of one-eighth of his fellow-citizens, and in varying degrees the more or less vague sympathy of very many more. But by the time his son was an old man, a hundred years later, not one Englishman in a hundred was a Catholic, nor had the whole country now anything but contempt and dislike for Catholicism. England alone of the great modern nations has enjoyed this complete moral unity, which she owes to two things: aristocracy, and her successful extirpation of the Catholic Faith.

There are two further marks of aristocratic government which England conspicuously showed henceforward.

First, it is continuous. A governing class never dies; it is well informed, especially in foreign affairs, because its members travel, are in close touch one with another, and have all, in the main, the same object in view.

Secondly, an aristocratic state is devoted to order as opposed to justice. Justice and order are both necessary to human society, but, according to whether you emphasize the one or the other, you get different kinds of states. Laws are made either that good men may live among bad or that rich men may live among poor. The second type of laws are those of an aristocratic state. The laws as made by members of the gentry in their assemblies or interpreted from their judicial bench are preferred to general morals.

At the same time an aristocracy produces the longest lasting and most numerous of national institutions. Everything in aristocratic England tended at last to become a national institution—even a newspaper or a game.

Again, in an aristocratic state individuals, however talented—great admirals, generals, statesmen—are of less account. It is their *class*, the social corporation to which they belong or into which they are received, which moulds the state and its fortunes. On this account the emphasis usually given to the distinction between the Whig type and the Tory type in the

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new modern England which succeeded to the Revolution is quite out of proportion. There was a difference, but it was a difference between different parts of one thing; and these parts were not very strongly contrasted. The Tory was, on the whole, the man who regretted much in the change which he none the less thought necessary. The Whig was the man who, on the whole, liked the change and only regretted it had not gone farther. But there were infinite degrees in these feelings, and a man or a family would often change from one camp to the other. Nor were the two camps clearly divided. Very few Tories would have liked even a Stuart who should remain Catholic; and very few Whigs would have been glad to see the name and trappings of monarchy disappear. In foreign affairs the main difference was that the Tory was, upon the whole, reluctant to break with the traditions of Europe, and was less violent in his hatred of France and of the Catholic culture in general. But the main interests of all the gentry were the same, and so were those of the wealthier mercantile classes and lawyers, who revered the gentry and recruited its ranks.

In this aristocratic state emphasis on particular Ministries, the succession of them in the Houses of Parliament, their intrigues, etc., is futile. The destinies of England after 1689 would have been much the same if this man or that had been Prime Minister in any given year. But they would have been very different if monarchy had revived.

**The Enmity between Aristocratic England and France.**  
The new England is distinguished during the two centuries of its development by a continuous antagonism to the power of France.

This has nothing to do with the old wars of the Middle Ages, when the English upper class was French-speaking. It is both a new sentiment and a new policy; a sentiment based upon a difference of religion and therefore of culture (for the type of culture in any society is the product of its religion); a policy based upon the rivalry between France and England for maritime power, trade, and expansion overseas: three things inseparable each from the other two. France was also the one other organized Great Power which was a serious rival to England. Holland, though still wealthy and with a great trading fleet, was no longer a match for England. Spain was in full decay, with no financial resources comparable to the extent of

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her territory and with a rapidly declining population. The Germans were still exhausted from the Thirty Years War, and divided into a number of independent states, over which the power of the Emperor had become nominal. Italy was also a mass of petty states, attached by alliance or by direct rule to greater Powers. France alone had a fleet that rivalled Britain's, a larger population, and, though hampered by well-divided property and therefore restricted credit and cramped financial resources, was always the formidable rival or superior. In the New World, and in trading relations with India, that rivalry remained acute for more than a lifetime: it continued in other forms to the mid-nineteenth century.

**The Increase in Population and Wealth.** This new aristocratic England was to increase more rapidly in population and wealth than any other European country. France also increased in both, but much more slowly. The increase was due to the beginning of expansion in physical sciences and to improved agriculture, and, although great increase in capital power was yet to come, new instruments of production made all the arts advance upon those of the past. But while France added perhaps a fifth, perhaps a quarter, to her population in the course of the whole eighteenth century, England did that in the first generation of it, and by the end of the century had doubled her population and much more than doubled her total wealth.

She had some six million souls at the time of William III; she had some seven and a half millions (it is presumed) by the middle of the century; she had, with Scotland, eleven and a half millions when the first census was taken at the beginning of the nineteenth. Her advantage lay, as I have said, in the concentration of the control of wealth in a comparatively small number of hands. The dispossessed peasantry were turning into a proletariat, and furnished cheap labour power; the balances of the great owners could be invested with more knowledge and rapidity of action than the small accumulations of a mass of yeomen farmers. From the presence of this new proletariat and of this concentrated effort in the hands of a few was to arise the social system later known as *Capitalism*. *Industrial Capitalism* was the special product of the new England, though it had not come to any stature until after the middle of the eighteenth century. It was to grow with the strength of England, to become the peculiar English mark, so that England

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may be said to grow with capitalism and to strengthen as capitalism strengthens. Her fortunes are inextricably mixed up with those of capitalism, and its ruin would imperil her life. The exploitation of the masses by a possessing class is the very core and essential of that affair, whereby the more and more subject masses are increased in number, the total wealth of the nation as a whole is still more increased, and with that increase goes an increase in the strength of the state at home and abroad—until, or unless, the overwhelming body of the dispossessed overbalance it.

**Difficulties of the New Form of Government.** The first difficulties the Revolutionary magnates who had introduced William III as a usurper had to meet were the fact that he was a foreigner, depending upon foreign troops, and his own sullen discontent at being a puppet in their hands. William's character was not merely morose and warped, it was also intelligent and very stubborn; he liked being called a King, but he wanted to use some shred of power; finding himself little more than the servant of those who had put him in against the legitimate royal family, he chafed.

His alien character made this position the more difficult. The mass of English people were by this time not only Protestant, but strongly anti-Catholic, especially in London—which counted as much as all the rest of the country put together. Therefore, other things being equal, they were glad to have a Protestant sovereign. But other things were not equal, because, though the Queen was a Stuart, William was nothing but a Dutch noble, not even as yet a true royalty. The foreign soldiers he had brought in were hated; the traditional dislike for the Dutch among the city populace and in the port of London—and, indeed, along all the South and East Coast—was very strong.

William was frightened of popular opinion. He would not live in the capital, but withdrew to Hampton Court, where he felt safer, and only later and rather reluctantly came as near as Kensington, where he bought a country house from one of the nobles. He went in dread of assassination, and there was, indeed, some chance of it, as we shall see.

Moreover, those who had brought him in were perpetually intriguing with the exiled King. The magnates liked to have a foot in each camp, even those who had not been, like Marl-

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borough, conspicuously cynical in their treasons. They had every reason for playing double in this fashion. It strengthened their hold over their nominal sovereign, and it gave them a chance of a second treason if fortune should favour James. Also, in case it were necessary to their plans to bring James back, it would give them a hold on him to be able to say that they had kept in touch with him. The one thing they had to be careful about was the Protestant opinion—in its most violent form—of the people of London. They could have played James against William and William against James quite successfully, as equals, if James had been willing to deny his religion. It was, at bottom, the devotion of the last Stuarts to the Catholic Church which finally lost them the monarchy of the three kingdoms. How far this cross-dealing of the great men between William and James would still go was to be seen in the attitude of Russell, and perhaps of Herbert, in the handling of the fleet. No one really knew until the last moment what the Admirals were going to do, and we shall see the effect of this in a moment.

**The Irish War : the Preliminaries.** The main armed effort at restoring the legitimate King and ousting the usurper was made in Ireland. Louis XIV was willing to help James to recover his throne, and he even sent a certain small contingent of troops to fight in Ireland, but it is essential to our understanding of the position to grasp the fact that Louis only dealt with Ireland, and with James II himself, as one of many means towards his own end. He was not specially concerned with seeing James restored to his throne, still less with his proving successful in his Irish campaign; what he *was* concerned with was the weakening of the coalition against himself. In this coalition William was one of the leading spirits, and to keep William and therefore England entangled and weakened, rather than to have William decisively defeated, was the aim of Louis XIV's Government.

William might have struck at once, before James was able to gather even such poor forces as he managed to raise. He was prevented from doing so by John Temple, the son of that Sir William Temple who had now for half a lifetime been trying to involve England in Dutch affairs. John Temple would have it that Tyrconnel, the great Catholic noble who was governing in Ireland, would not fight. He therefore gave wrong advice;

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and when he found how wrong he was he drowned himself; for on the envoys of William approaching Tyrconnel the Prince of Orange found that an armed struggle could not be avoided.

James landed at Kinsale on March 12, 1689; he made a state entry into Dublin on the 24th, and summoned a Parliament to meet him on May 7. His chances, we know, were small because the help he could receive from Louis XIV would only be slight. He had also against him the Papacy, which was hostile to Louis (and therefore to the allies of Louis) because, as we have seen, the King of France had proclaimed Gallican principles, and had gone very far in denying the right of the Holy See to give orders to the Church in France. This hostile attitude of the Papacy has given rise to the idea that the Holy See, which animated all the resistance to Louis XIV throughout Western Europe and supported it with funds, had also financed William's invasion of Ireland. The thing has often been asserted, but no proof has ever been put forward.

The Irish Parliament met, and proceeded to set right the injustices of the last thirty years. Like the English Parliament, it chiefly consisted of gentry sent by the boroughs. Tyrconnel had got rid of the old tyranny whereby the borough councils were made artificially Protestant; he gave them back their liberty, and the consequence was that the Commons, now met at Dublin, were overwhelmingly Catholic in religion and national in tradition. When Cromwell had landed the division of the soil had been, as to value, nearly half Catholic, and, as to acreage, somewhat more than half (11 to 10); and it will be remembered that after Cromwell's career of massacre and robbery the so-called settlement gradually enforced upon Ireland utterly upset these proportions. Nearly nine-tenths of Irish land as to acreage and much more than nine-tenths as to value were lost to the Catholic and native owners and transferred in part to English adventurers, but in part as property to absentee landlords in England, of whom among the most important were the City of London and its corporations.

It will be remembered also that in 1660-65 Charles II had, with the object of saving his new position as restored monarch, allowed this huge transfer of wealth to stand. In this, the first free Parliament, the greatest of these evils was undone, and the land was settled back again in its original form, as before Cromwell, of roughly half and half between the native Catholic

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owners and their opponents. But the Irish Parliament did more than that; it affirmed the right of Ireland to trade with the English colonies, it proclaimed complete toleration for every sect of Protestantism, and ordered that tithe should be paid to every religion according to the religion of the owner of the tithe-paying land. It confiscated the property of absentees, notably of the London merchants, money-dealers, and corporations, but it proposed to compensate *bona fide* purchasers of the stolen lands out of the property confiscated from those who had rebelled against James II. Having accomplished this just work (which, of course, could never stand if another invasion were to reconquer the country), it dispersed on July 18, 1689.

**The Irish War: the Fighting.** James's effort in Ireland was foredoomed. The contingent of trained troops sent by Louis XIV was wholly insufficient for a decision, not being intended for more than a diversion; while the rest, the Irish levies—excellent raw material—were for the most part wholly untrained. Armament was almost entirely lacking. Reports have survived to show that great numbers could only be armed with staves, and that in many companies only one musket in ten was serviceable. There was no siege artillery whatever and hardly any field artillery. Under such conditions an attempt was strangely made to take the walled town of Derry. Derry had plenty of guns and a sufficiency of trained men, but it allowed itself to be besieged because it was the walled town of refuge into which the Protestants of the North had retired. It was relieved, and the blockade ended, by the end of July 1689. Schomberg, who had gone over (as a Protestant) from the French service to that of William, landed with a force about half that of James. James awaited him two days' march north of Dublin. Schomberg did not feel strong enough to attack, and he waited for the large reinforcements which would come to him the next season.

The next year William arrived in person, and there was a total force of 40,000 men, counting the garrisons, at his service; of whom 36,000 formed his mobile field army. In numbers he brought to battle 80 per cent. more than James, in trained men perhaps three times as many; and in artillery 400 per cent. of James's guns. It is astonishing that under such circumstances he should have allowed James's army to escape!

James held the defensive line of the Boyne with his grossly

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insufficient force; William attacked him on July 1, 1690, when the tide had fallen sufficiently for the river to be forded. A detachment was sent round by the right flank to cross a bridge up river and come on the rear of James's army, but William's incompetence as a general was notorious to all Europe, and the whole affair was bungled. Schomberg was shot in the back by one of his own men in the course of the action, and William, who had been grazed by a cannon-ball, could not get home on the left. The royalist army got away with the loss of only one gun and only 6 per cent. of its numbers, so that it was able to prolong the war for many months. James, however, committed the capital error of abandoning the effort. The capital was now uncovered, and that political peril had the exaggerated military effect it so often has in history. He thought that further resistance would be impossible, and went back to France.

The reduction of the Irish armed resistance was slow and piecemeal, in spite of the overwhelming superiority of the enemy; a last stand was made in Limerick, and was so successfully maintained that Ginkel, the Dutch general in command, concluded the famous Treaty of Limerick, because further resistance might have imperilled William's cause. This treaty, the date of which is October 1691, is an important landmark in the relations between the English and Irish peoples. The garrison of Limerick consented to surrender on conditions, the three best-known ones of which are that they should be allowed to take service in France, that there should be a full amnesty, and also that certain lands should be restored to their rightful owners. But far the most important part of the treaty was the solemn agreement that no oath should be tendered henceforward to Catholics in Ireland save the Oath of Allegiance—in other words, that they were not to be penalized for their religion by making an oath against it compulsory, and that men should be free to practise the Catholic Faith under the same conditions as they had been in the reign of Charles II. This treaty was cynically broken by William's authorities—or, rather, by the Parliament of which he was the servant. This breaking of the Treaty of Limerick is as important as the confiscation of Irish land in the story of the relations between the two countries. The full fruits of that breach of treaty are yet to be felt.

**Battle of Cape La Hogue.** The last episode in the efforts

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of James to recover his throne with the help of Louis XIV was the naval action called after Cape La Hogue, on the French shore opposite the Isle of Wight. Three fleets were present—the Dutch, the English under Russell, and the French, commanded by Tourville, who had won a striking victory off Beachy Head two years before. All three fleets were roughly of a size, so that a combination of any two would give a two to one superiority over the third, while the abstention of the Dutch or the English would leave even chances for the French. Russell had given it to be understood in the course of the treasons and counter-treasons that he would stand neutral; Tourville therefore attacked, but Russell joined in with the Dutch. Tourville was therefore badly defeated, losing thirteen ships, and James's chances of returning to England with an armed force were lost (May 19, 1692).

**The Scottish Fighting.** Meanwhile in Scotland there had been a certain effort to stand up for the national dynasty of the Stuarts, but the only active part of this effort lay with the Highlanders, led by Claverhouse, to whom James had given the title of Dundee. On July 27, 1689, Mackay, at the head of 4000 men in the service of William, clashed with Claverhouse in the defile of Killiecrankie, near which the castle of Blair was being held for King James, in the valley of the Garry—which may be called the gate of the Highlands. Dundee's small force of 2000 Highlanders in one charge downhill destroyed Mackay's army, half of whom were killed, while the other half fled in panic. But at the best nothing but a guerrilla warfare could have been carried on, and in less than a year resistance was over. The defeat of James in Ireland made it certain that no succour could come, and the Highland clans were given to the last day of 1691 to tender their submission.

The dying out of the Scottish resistance is famous for the massacre of the Clan Macdonald in the Pass of Glencoe. Their chief had been among the last to come in, his oath had been postponed by the Government official, and he could not take it before the sheriff of his county until January 7, 1692. William gave orders that this clan, being Catholic, should be extirpated. On February 1 a company of soldiers were billeted upon the clansmen and hospitably received, remaining in cordial relations with them for nearly a fortnight. Suddenly, upon the morning of February 13, the soldiers fell upon their hosts, shot

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the chief in the back, and proceeded to follow out their secret orders—which were to murder every man under seventy years of age; to these in their zeal the soldiers added certain women and children. Some escaped, but through no fault of William's soldiers.

**The Trouble with Marlborough.** Of William's many troubles, due to his ignorance of the English people, to his morose character, and to the uncertainty of the support he received, the worst was Marlborough. Indeed, one might write the history of the twenty years following, from 1692, more significantly in terms of Marlborough than either of William or of the two Stuart Princesses, for it is Marlborough's sense of his own genius, his desire to govern, his lack of scruple, and his great victories abroad which are, on the political side, the mark of the time.

Marlborough was a man much in the public eye; very handsome, widely admired, and already known to be of competence in military affairs. He had been the principal agent in getting rid of James II, and the principal traitor in the betrayal of that old master, friend, and patron of his. Marlborough alone had dared to entrap James in the Warminster proposal which, if he had accepted it, would have presumably ended in his death. Marlborough would certainly be ready to make a second betrayal if he found it desirable and to treat William as he had treated James: hence the acute anxiety in which William stood in face of Marlborough.

Now, the great opportunity which Marlborough had was the hold of his wife over the Princess Anne. Both the Stuart Princesses had been remarkable for the intensity of their female friendships, and the control exercised by Lady Marlborough over Anne was extraordinary. But there was a quarrel between Anne and her sister Mary; it was partly jealous rivalry, but it was also mixed up with Anne's lingering feeling in favour of her father and half-brother; she was persuaded to a half-reconciliation with James; she wrote him penitent letters, and never wholly accepted the usurpation of her brother-in-law. This quarrel Marlborough, through his wife, fomented, and he also did everything possible to have the Dutch soldiers of William sent away. The intrigue grew violent and dangerous; William's inseparable and too close companion, the Dutchman Bentinck, got wind of something like a regular plot, and on

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January 25, 1692, Marlborough was suddenly stripped of all his offices and dismissed from court. Anne was ordered to get rid of Lady Marlborough, and answered by making her friendship firmer than ever and leaving London with her favourite. ✓

**The Bank of England and the National Debt.** We now approach what is much the most important landmark in all these years and, after the Reformation and the destruction of the monarchy, the most important event in modern English history. At the end of the year 1692 a group of rich men, who made the politician Montague their agent, proposed to follow the method of state finance which the Dutch had founded long before, and to mortgage to their advantage the powers of government. Montague's first proposal was put forward on December 15, 1692. On January 20, 1693, came the first regular inception of the plan, which was matured in the course of the next few months. Money was needed for William's policy of Continental war, and this group of rich men proposed to lend the Government £1,200,000 upon terms which, including commissions and perquisites, came to between 8 and 9 per cent.

This was the beginning of what later came to be called the National Debt, for its special character was not merely the lending of the money to the Government, a transaction as old as history, but the novel proposal that the interest should be strictly guaranteed on the security of the national taxes, while immediately afterwards a privileged institution was called into existence, a central bank, which should have the handling of the loan and the interest, and the right to issue notes of credit *on the security of the Government*.

This last point was the essential. Anyone can issue a note of credit (which is merely a promise to pay) and can use it in lieu of money if he can persuade other people to accept it. But the special character of this new institution, the Bank of England (the charter of which dates from July 27, 1694), lay in this: that when it made out a paper promise to pay, all the resources of England were to be put at its disposal to enable it to keep that promise—in other words, its credit was not private but public. It could not fail so long as the Government could tax Englishmen in order to pay its debts. This was in effect to give the Bank of England the right of creating money. It could not coin the metals gold and silver; the Government

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reserved its right to do that; but it could print on a bit of paper, "I, the Bank of England, promise to pay the bearer five pounds," and the bearer knew that there would be no default so long as a Government responsible for the Bank charter existed and could force people to pay taxes. All the fiscal resources of the nation were a guarantee for the payment. If you or I promise on a bit of paper to pay five pounds to anyone on delivery, and find we cannot meet the obligation, we have to default, after which any future promise of ours of the same kind would be heavily discounted. We cannot turn to a neighbour and levy a tax upon him and say, "You must make good this promise of mine; if you do not I shall distrain upon your goods." But that is exactly what the new credit system meant for the Bank of England. The Bank of England note for five pounds—that is, a promise by the Bank of England to pay five pounds—was certain to be met, because if by some accident the Bank could not meet it the taxpayers of the country could be called upon to pay it, and the ultimate certitude the holder of the paper had of getting paid was the public force at the disposal of the Government, which can collect taxes from the community. The Bank of England paper being thus guaranteed, there need be no hurry to cash it; it could pass from hand to hand in the same way as current metallic coin. But the Bank of England was not a department of Government, as it should have been. It was an independent corporation, privileged and guaranteed by Government but pursuing a policy of its own; and from that day onward in greater and greater degree the Bank of England has had the last say in any Government policy involving expense, and particularly in the matter of foreign wars and coercion of dependencies.

The effects of this revolution in national finance were enormous. In the first place, it powerfully strengthened the already strong support given by the big money-dealers in the City to William's Government. A Jacobite restoration was under no obligation to honour the bond of the usurping Government, and thus not only every one who had lent money, but every one who held Bank of England paper, had an interest in maintaining William upon his imitation throne. The National Debt had the same effect, for every one who had a share therein was interested in William's remaining King.

Even now it was intended to repay the indebtedness sooner

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or later, and plans were made for its extinction by lotteries and by life-pensions; but under the new scheme, with the power of manufacturing extra money and of obtaining extra credit, the temptation to public expenditure was irresistible, especially when it was coupled with the temptation to foreign war; therefore the debt increased very much more rapidly than the efforts to extinguish it.

The first advance had been, as we have seen, just over a million. In four years the National Debt was twenty millions, and in twenty years it was already over fifty millions. It became a permanent institution. In this fashion Governments were enabled, for their immediate purposes, to saddle posterity with the duty of financing their wars, while, what was worse, wealthy men found an opportunity for levying a permanent tax upon the community. If you had £10,000 to invest all you had to do was to buy Government stock, and you were certain of getting your interest for ever out of the taxpayer. To-day every family in England is paying on the average £25 a year to the holders of Government stock—that is, to those to whom the Government have had recourse as moneylenders.

**The Death of Mary and the Assassination Plot.** William's fear of the results of his unpopularity was not ill-founded, and now received further confirmation. There had already been plenty of plots against him besides Marlborough's main action—his wife's uncle, Clarendon, had been the head of one of them. Lord Preston had been at the head of another, and certain bishops were mixed up in the affair. Queen Mary, by whom alone William had any right to rule in England, had, in spite of her reputation for being almost deficient, proved something of a support. She died on December 28, 1694. The absence of that one of the joint-monarchs with a shred of title, though it made William's position still weaker, did not destroy it. He strengthened it somewhat by a reconciliation with Anne and Marlborough, which the latter admitted because William's health now seemed to be giving way, so that he would not have long to wait before Anne herself should be Queen.

But in January 1696 the Duke of Berwick, James's illegitimate son by Marlborough's sister and one of the best soldiers of his time, came over to England to sound the prospects of a restoration, and certain preparations were made on the chance of an invasion. Sir George Barclay desired to attack William in person,

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in the hope that it would be called an act of war: he also had come over at this time, but there is no sufficient proof that Berwick was behind him—still less that James was. At any rate, on Saturday, February 15, 1696, William was to have been assassinated by a body of men while on his way to go hunting. It was again Bentinck who warned his dear companion, and William escaped. But in connection with the trials that followed much of the double-dealing of the principal men, Marlborough, and Russell, of the fleet, Shrewsbury and the rest, became public.

### **The Protestant Succession. The Death of William.**

The next domestic event of importance was the death of the little Duke of Gloucester, the only surviving child of the Princess-Anne. It took place upon July 29, 1700. Had the child lived (his father, Anne's husband, was Prince George of Denmark) there would have been a Protestant Stuart heir to the throne; with his disappearance there was no Protestant Stuart left. Those who still desired a Stuart succession would have to admit the Catholic James or his son, then a boy of twelve years of age. Hence the Bill of Succession, which settled the crown after Anne's death upon Sophia, widow of the Elector of Hanover. She was a Protestant, being the daughter of Elizabeth, so-called Queen of Bohemia, Charles I's sister. Sophia was thus James II's first cousin, and the first cousin once removed of Anne.

By this Bill all Catholic heirs to the throne were excluded. In the next year, on September 16, 1701, James II died in exile at Saint-Germains in France, and Louis XIV recognized his son, the boy James, as King, under the title of James III of England. This formal act on the part of Louis did a great deal to strengthen the new Protestant settlement in England. For it was done independently of English opinion, without consultation, and against the spirit of the recent treaty. A Bill of Attainder was brought against James III and votes were passed for war, but before this could break out William died on Monday, March 8 (Old Style), 1702. He had only fallen from his horse and broken a collarbone, but his constitution was bad, and, though he was a man only just over fifty-one years old, he sank under the shock.

**Foreign Affairs under William III.** In foreign affairs the interest of William's reign lies in his power of persuading

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the rich Englishmen who had put him on the throne to involve the country in his Continental policy of opposing France. They had no personal interest in so acting after the military chances of James had disappeared; on the other hand, the City of London and the wealthy class in general had, after 1693-94, a direct interest in starting expenditure upon foreign war, because it would give them an income out of the taxpayers. The commercial and colonial rivalry with France had not yet arisen as a motive.

The new fighting opened with a minor disaster. A descent was made on Brest on June 7, 1694, in which a number of English soldiers were engaged under Talmash. It could only succeed as a surprise, and the French Government had been warned in time. They could use several sources of information, and among them *may* have been Marlborough.<sup>1</sup>

The chief interest to English history of these foreign adventures prior to the Peace of Ryswick is the way in which they show the hold already established by the Bank of England. When the King in his difficulties applied for more money for the war the Bank decided that they had gone far enough, and turned him down. Their reason for doing so was that certain men surrounding him had proposed to start a rival bank, to be called the Land Bank. It was an interesting experiment, got up by the lesser landed gentry and the Tories, as against the moneyed interest of the City; but the Bank of England killed it, and it also at the same time crushed its earlier rivals, the private bankers, the goldsmiths. They had bought up the Bank's promises to pay, and presented them simultaneously. Now, a Bank can never meet the money it has promised to pay if all the promises to pay are presented at once, because it does business on the condition of pretending to have more money than it really has—which is the whole principle of banking. The Bank of England was therefore, in plain morals, bankrupt; but the lawyers came to its aid, and while the claims were being debated before them the difficulty was tided over. The

<sup>1</sup> The so-called memoirs of James II, containing this information, are not directly from his own hand—a fact that was always suspected and is now confirmed by evidence. They were put together from materials left by James and only compiled after the King's death. Like many other documents of the same kind, they are trustworthy when they have corroboration, are consonant with known facts, and where there is no motive for interpolation.

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Bank, having thus defeated all its enemies and humbled the King, the Whig Party, which was largely represented in the City interests, arranged that the Bank should give a small immediate sum of £200,000, for which William was clamouring.

The Whigs showed their power also about this time by putting to death without trial, by attainder, Sir John Fenwick, a supporter of the exiled King, who had already made public the way in which many of them, by a second treason, negotiated with James after having given their allegiance to William. Their fear that more would come out in a regular trial convinced them that death without trial was the shortest way out. The Lords approved of this murder by a majority of seven, and William refused a pardon.

In March 1697 hostilities were brought for the moment to an end, by the Peace of Ryswick, which was ratified in September. The King of France promised to make no further attempts to upset William or support James's claim to the throne, and on the Continent yielded the main part of what the coalition had demanded. But the Treaty of Ryswick was really only a truce, for at any moment there might arise the great question of the Spanish Succession, on which it was certain that there would be conflict. And it was because Louis XIV had the Spanish Succession in view, as something far more important than the arrangements with England and Holland, that he made such favourable terms. The treaty had all the appearance of generosity or the acceptance of defeat—whichever term one chooses to use—for Louis gave up his principal recent conquests except Strasbourg, everything on the right bank of the Rhine, and appeared to accept a generally adverse settlement. But he did so because he looked forward at any moment to the opportunities which the disputed Spanish Succession would give him.

**The Spanish Succession.** The Spanish Empire was, in the eyes of contemporaries, the largest human thing. Spain herself had declined in population and wealth very heavily, though gradually, during the last two hundred years. But men are slow to recognize the effects of these things. On the map she still looked like more than half the world. She had a compact portion of Southern Italy, the Southern Netherlands, Pacific islands, and all the wealth and colonial power of Central and Southern America—more than half the New World—with

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the exception of the ill-known territory of Brazil; and for the rest of America there were only the Dutch and English colonies, now under the English Crown, perhaps 200,000 people, and on the frozen banks of the St Lawrence a few thousand Frenchmen.

This great Empire of Spain was in danger of partition. The King of all that vast extent of territory was Charles II, the son of Philip IV, who had died in 1665. Charles II was physically weak, his death had been expected at any time during the last twenty-five years, he had no heir: his elder sister (the daughter of his father's first marriage) was Louis XIV's Queen. When he died who should succeed him?

The legitimate heir was Louis XIV's wife, Maria Theresa. She had on her marriage renounced (as was almost invariably done in similar cases) for herself and her descendants her rights to the throne of Spain. But these renunciations were easily got over on one pretext or another—her dowry had never been properly paid, and that could be claimed as a breach of contract. Moreover, Louis XIV had made an arrangement years before with the Emperor (another principal claimant, a grandson of a former King of Spain) that the French Queen's renunciation of Spanish rights should not count. Apart from the Imperial family, there was the child of the Elector of Bavaria, descended from another sister of the reigning King of Spain.

All these complications do not much concern the history of England save in as far as they produced what was called the War of the Spanish Succession, in which an English general of genius, Marlborough, obtained great glory, but which had little result upon the development of England.

After the Treaty of Ryswick had been signed there had been a first agreement at a partition of the Spanish Empire between the various claimants, of whom the chief was the King of Spain's own great-nephew, a boy, the son of the Elector of Bavaria. This boy died in 1699, the second year after the treaty, and that death made a very great difference. The Spaniards had already become first annoyed, then anxious, and at last furious at the idea of their great territories being divided between various claimants; and they would certainly support any claimant who could promise to maintain the unity of their whole Empire. Such a claimant was most obviously found in a descendant of Louis XIV's Queen, the representative of the elder branch of the Spanish monarchy. Charles II had made

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a will in favour of the little Bavarian Prince, as being the nearest to him in blood, for he was descended from his own sister, whereas Louis XIV's wife was only his half-sister; but when the boy died in 1699 some new arrangement had to be made.

William of Orange, who had usurped the crown of England, had blundered, as he commonly did: in spite of the rising Spanish feeling, he still wanted to partition the Spanish dominions, and he supported a scheme whereby England and Holland should attempt to inherit the vast American empire of Spain, while the Emperor should be the main beneficiary in Europe. The anger of the Spanish people was rising at such proposals, and the King of Spain, after consulting the Pope, who wisely advised him to keep the Empire intact, left the whole of his dominions, undivided, to the grandson of Louis XIV and his wife. This grandson was Philip, Duke of Anjou, a lad of seventeen, the younger son of the French Dauphin.<sup>1</sup>

Charles made his will to that effect on October 12, 1700, and died three weeks later, on November 1. In spite of what was called the Grand Alliance, which William of Orange had joined for continuing the idea of partition, Louis XIV accepted the succession for his grandson. It was obviously a dangerous course, and might lead to war between him and the disappointed partitioners of the Spanish Empire, but, having made his decision, he kept to it, and the young Duke of Anjou was received in Spain with the acclamation of the Spanish people, who depended upon this solution for the preservation and integrity of their dominions. By December 1700 the new Bourbon dynasty was established in Madrid.

William of Orange could not make war as he wished, for opinion in England was strongly in favour of accepting what had happened; Englishmen did not see why they should be involved in further Continental fighting and further expense for a scheme which would not benefit them, save on the distant chance of some precarious footing in the Spanish colonies.

It was in the midst of all these complications that James II died, that Louis XIV challenged the interests of the English aristocracy and the City of London by recognizing James III, and that later William himself died—ridding England of a very

<sup>1</sup> Failing his acceptance, all was to go to Austria, which would thus encircle France in Belgium, the Jura, and the Pyrenees, and would certainly share Spanish America with England and Holland.

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unpopular figure, but incidentally leaving the field open for Marlborough's military ambition. The Princess Anne, who now succeeded to the English throne, was in the hands of Marlborough's wife and of Marlborough himself; and if the position she inherited could be made to lead to open war Marlborough, who knew the talents he had in him, would have the chance of playing a principal part in that war.

**Marlborough's Wars.** Marlborough had his way, and his great career as a soldier forms the chief interest of the twelve years of Anne's reign. It is therefore with the foreign aspect of that reign that we must deal before we speak of its domestic incidents.

Anne having succeeded to the throne in March 1702, war was declared immediately afterwards, and Marlborough was appointed commander-in-chief of the combined Dutch and English forces. He was already a man of fifty-two, with a sufficient but not very conspicuous military reputation, when fortune thus put a great opportunity for fame into his hands. For ten years he was to fight with a record of winning every action he undertook—whether in the field or in siege work or in attack upon lines. It is the most complete military career in the history of modern times.

The political effect of such splendid victories has been inevitably exaggerated: Louis XIV obtained in spite of them the object of his desperate struggle and retained nearly the whole of the Spanish Empire for his grandson. Further, the difficulties he had to meet in facing the great coalition against him, at the end of his life and with his resources so largely diminished, would in any case have threatened him with disaster; but it is true to say that but for Marlborough's genius as a soldier Louis XIV's success might have been more complete. To say, as is often said, that on account of that genius the Continental enemies of Louis, notably Austria, were saved from complete overthrow is nonsense. Louis had no chance of recovering the dominating position he had formerly held, but it was Marlborough's genius which made the difference between the partial success of Louis' difficult defensive and what might have been a more complete success. He prevented Belgium becoming French.

Marlborough's talents showed themselves in a succession of actions which are as follows :

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(1) In the first campaign, that of 1702, Marlborough cleared the French out of the valley of the lower Meuse, which was partly held with insufficient French forces. The French, retiring eastward, drew up a line of fortification all the way from Antwerp to the Meuse near Namur, in order to cover Brussels and the wealthier part of the Spanish Netherlands, which they claimed to administer in the name of Louis XIV's grandson. It was this first success which gained for Marlborough the title of Duke.

(2) In the next year an attempt to capture Antwerp failed, but in the year following (1704) Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy organized a plan for marching to the Danube to prevent the forces of Louis and those of his ally, the Elector of Bavaria, from advancing towards Vienna. The plan was completely successful, and on August 13, 1704, it culminated in the great and decisive action known to the English and their allies as the battle of Blenheim (from Blindheim, a village on the Danube right in the field of the battle), and to the French as Hochstadt (from a small town lying behind the battlefield). It was the first great defeat Louis XIV's armies had suffered. The chief French general present, Marshal Tallard, was captured, and less than half the Franco-Bavarian forces remained intact after the battle—there were 11,000 prisoners and a hundred guns taken. The same year was remarkable for the seizing of the Rock of Gibraltar by an English and Dutch force. The English Government held it in the name of the Archduke Charles, their claimant, until he should be accepted as King of Spain; and as he never was so accepted they continued to hold it, and hold it to this day.

(3) In 1705 Marlborough pierced the line of fortifications which the French had constructed between Namur and Antwerp and destroyed that defensive system, but got no farther. In 1706 he won a victory of far more effect than Blenheim, the battle of Ramillies, due more even than Blenheim to his personal genius in the choice and use of ground. The effects were greater than those of Blenheim, because through Ramillies the French lost Belgium. Two years later, in 1708, their effort to regain a foothold failed through Marlborough's victory of Oudenarde, a victory far less complete than Ramillies, but sufficient to permit a further advance and the investment and capture of Lille; while in the Mediterranean the French seized

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a position of greater strategical value than Gibraltar, the harbour of Port Mahon and its island of Minorca. Soon these fell to England. Had it been possible to retain them the effect upon history would have been incalculable.

(4) In the next year, 1709, the battle of Malplaquet was fought, with indecisive results and at a very great expense of life on both sides; but the pressure upon Louis was still sufficient to compel the retirement of the French lines into France itself, and those lines, drawn up by Villars, were again pierced by Marlborough's genius in what was perhaps the finest strategical success of all his career, in 1711.

There followed the capture and siege of Bouchain, after which Marlborough himself thought it might have been possible to advance into the heart of France. But at this point a halt was called to the English effort, partly by the fall of Marlborough, who lost his hold upon the court and succumbed to his enemies at home, but more through the financial power of the City and the Bank of England. The debt had grown alarming, no results of direct commercial or financial value to England herself were apparent; and therefore, mainly under the pressure of the financiers and the Bank, but partly also through the intrigues against Marlborough himself, England's effort in this war came to an end. It was a point in favour of Marlborough's claims to be the soul of success in the previous campaigns that when he was no longer in the field the French won at last the decisive victory of Denain, recovering the belt of country they had lost on the Belgian frontier, and finding themselves in a position to negotiate, exhausted though they were, an easier peace.

**The Treaty of Utrecht.** In the year 1713 a series of treaties put to an end the War of the Spanish Succession. That which concerned England was the Treaty of Utrecht. It marked the success of Louis XIV's great effort. The war had been fought to prevent the passing of the Spanish crown to a Bourbon prince, and that object had not been attained. The Spanish Empire was not kept intact so far as Europe was concerned; the various claimants obtained outlying fragments of it in Europe—the most important change in view of the future being the separation of Belgium from Madrid and the installation there of Austrian power. The southern half of the Netherlands, governed from Brussels, became in future not the Spanish Netherlands, but the Austrian Netherlands.

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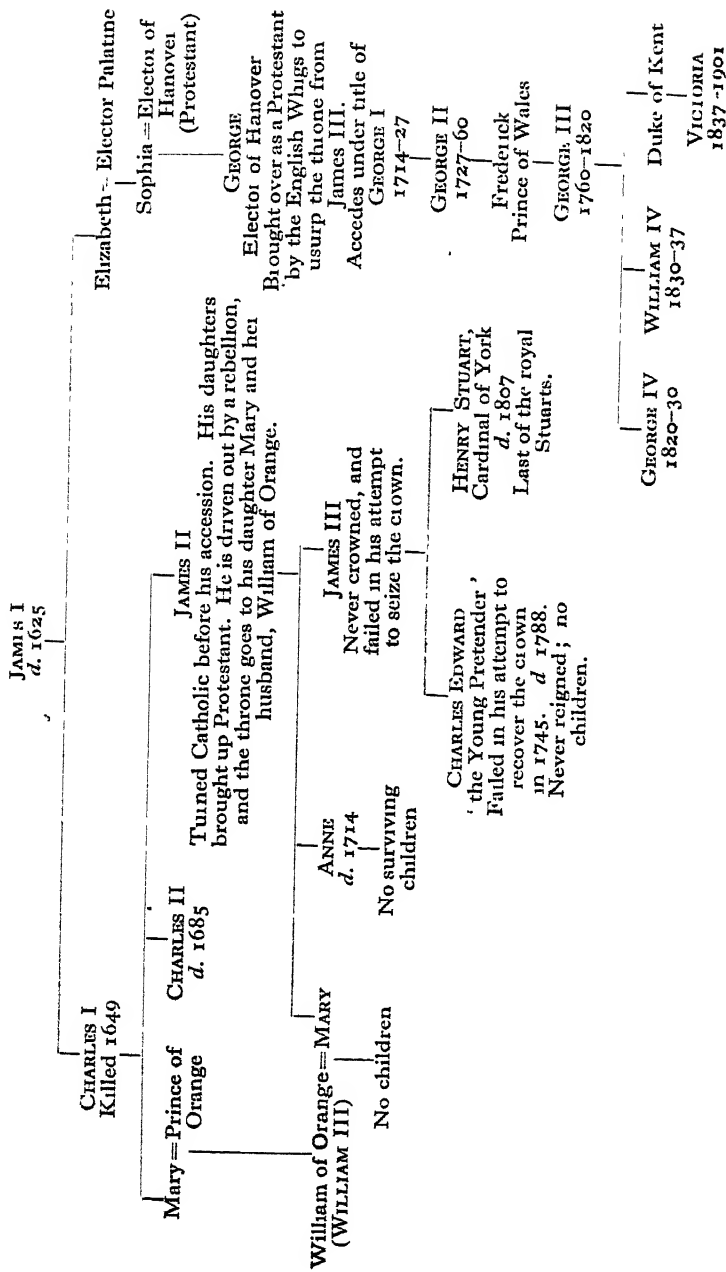
England obtained the recognition of the Protestant succession, but for the rest she stood very much where she had stood before the genius of her great general had won that series of victories which began at Blenheim and ended at Bouchain.

**The Union with Scotland.** While the War of the Spanish Succession was proceeding and forming the main interest of the time the political union of England and Scotland was established. The work is identified with Anne's reign. William had desired it, of course, because it would have increased his very doubtful power, but his name was too much hated north of the border for the thing to be done in his time. But soon after his death commissioners were appointed to make arrangements for the Union. They reached no conclusion. The Scottish Parliament met in the spring of the next year, 1703, and was strongly separatist in tone; it broke up without passing a subsidy. In the next year, 1704, Somers, the lawyer who had been the brain of the 1688 Revolution, put pressure on the Scotch; before the end of the year it became law that Scotchmen twelve months later were to be regarded as aliens and imports from Scotland were forbidden; war was also threatened by the calling out of the militia in the North. By 1706 the resistance of the Scotch was worn down and the Union was accomplished. The title of the Crown was changed to that of the "United Kingdom," Scottish members were to be returned to Westminster in the proportion of about one-twelfth of the existing House of Commons, and the House of Lords was to contain sixteen Scottish peers. On January 16, 1707, the measure was passed in the Scottish Parliament by 110 votes to 69.

Some knowledge of the financial situation helps us to understand this result. England was raising a public revenue of nearer six than five millions a year; that of Scotland was £160,000. Of population we have no exact figures, but it was probably in a proportion of about one to seven, or perhaps one to eight.

**The Death of the Queen and the Trick which determined the Succession.** Anne's health was breaking down in the months following upon the end of the foreign war. When she should die there would be an opportunity for the restoration of her own family, the legitimate Stuart line, in spite of the public Acts which recognized the Electress Sophia as her successor.

# THE ADVENT OF THE HANOVERIANS



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Though it is not probable that, had James III obtained the throne as a Protestant, very much would have been changed in the new England of the Revolution, yet enough might have been changed to render the subsequent history of England different from what it was. The poor remnant of the royal power might have been increased under kings who were gentlemen, British, and of the national dynasty, and to whom a strong feeling of personal affection would attach. The new financial system, with the new Bank of England in control, would certainly survive and be more and more the master of society, but there would be some counter-weight to it and possibly some diminution in the corresponding power of the great moneyed interests—the big landowners and the City merchants. The chances on the whole were in favour of a restoration but for one thing—the religion of the claimant, James III. It was the religion of his father, James II, which had been his undoing, because it was upon that element of unpopularity that the aristocracy worked to achieve their end. The Catholic minority had become much less both in numbers and in action during the intervening twenty-five years, and London, which decided the affairs of England, was more anti-Catholic than ever.

The man who would have put James III upon the throne, if the thing could be done, was Henry St John, better known as Lord Bolingbroke. This man was by far the greatest political genius and finest orator produced by England in the eighteenth century, and one of the very few whose personality made a difference in the new aristocratic system where class outweighed character. He was almost alone among that class in supporting the idea of true monarchy. He was now a man at the height of his powers, thirty-six years of age, and had been in the Ministry for ten years past; was Foreign Secretary, and had negotiated the Peace of Utrecht.

He did what he could to prepare for the restoration of the English royal line, but the task was a difficult one. First, because the young King, James III (he was twenty-six), refused to apostatize; secondly, because the main factor in Bolingbroke's scheme was uncertain. He could not know the moment of Anne's death.

As the law stood the succession was fixed upon the Electress Sophia, and she would be the next Queen of England by statute

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—that is, if we grant the new Revolutionary doctrine that the rich and their Parliament could dispose of the crown of England at will. Therefore, whatever was to be done must be done by way of secret intrigue, and the blow struck suddenly and unexpectedly in the very hour when the Queen should die. If the plans were matured too early they would be countered before that right moment; if they were not matured early enough that right moment would pass before they could be put into action. The Whig Party was wholly attached by all its traditions to the Parliamentary victory and Parliamentary title, so that it demanded the Electress of Hanover—or rather her son, the Elector. And though the Tories were in power, with Bolingbroke as their most prominent leader, a very large number of them, being Parliamentarians, were opposed to a Stuart restoration. Bolingbroke moved that the Protestant succession was not in danger—as much as to say that he would vouch for the Protestantism of the Stuart house should it be restored. The motion was passed; but the other side made a successful demand that the Electoral Prince George of Hanover (later George II) should receive a writ of summons to the House of Lords in his character of Duke of Cambridge, hoping that he might be on the spot when the Queen should die. The writ could not be refused lest the plan for a Stuart restoration should be made manifest, but there went with it an angry letter from Anne to the Electress Sophia which so shocked that aged lady that she died. Anne had a stroke at the end of July 1714, and the Council was hurriedly summoned. It might have decided for the Great Change and James might have been declared King the moment the Queen should pass, but there was a counter-plot which undid Bolingbroke's schemes. The most important man socially and politically in the Government was the spineless Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury. His weak character was quite dominated by Somers, eight years his senior, who had caused him to apostatize from his original Catholic religion—and Somers was still alive.

Even as the Council—what we should call to-day the Cabinet—was sitting, the Dukes of Argyll and Somerset (the greatest men on the anti-Stuart side) demanded admittance as Privy Councillors, and Shrewsbury, who was in their secret and was sitting at the table, moved that they should be admitted. They proposed that the dying Queen should be visited, and in her

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last dying moment of consciousness, if, indeed, she were fully conscious, the white staff which would make Shrewsbury Lord Treasurer and head of the Government was given to this tool of the Hanoverian party.

From that moment the issue was decided. The armed force was collected and made ready; the Elector was summoned to come to England; and when the Queen died on August 1 the change in dynasty took place and the Elector of Hanover was made King George I of England. Bolingbroke fled to France.

**The Fifteen.** Had James III struck, by a prepared plan, at the very moment of the Queen's death the young man might have succeeded. But everything was mishandled, though the national feeling in Scotland violently opposed the Hanoverians, as did the mass of opinion in England outside London—especially in the West. An armed force was necessary to James III, and an armed force which should have been ready to act at once. It could come only from France. But the last days of Louis XIV were allowed to pass without action. The French King died on September 1, thirteen months after Anne, with nothing accomplished for James, in spite of Bolingbroke's unceasing industry and energy for the legitimate cause. *He* saw then that it was too late, and sent word from abroad to say so; meanwhile James had imprudently taken the matter into his own hands. He commissioned the Earl of Mar, who was Secretary for Scotland at Anne's death, to act for him. The English Ambassador tried to get James assassinated, and the new French Government, the regency of the Duke of Orleans, which was strongly in favour of peace with England, may have been privy to the attempt. James got away from Saint-Malo. The Whigs and their Hanoverian Prince had about 8000 troops under arms, and had asked for 6000 Dutchmen to come and help, while Argyll, the hereditary opponent in Scotland of the Scottish national feeling, was pitted against Mar. Mar raised the Highlanders, but the Hanoverians held Stirling, which is the key-point of all Scotland, being the stronghold in the strategic 'wasps-waist' between the Highlands and the Lowlands, barring any effort from the Grampians southward. A detachment which went across the Forth to surprise Edinburgh failed, but went down into England by the other side of the Border. It was joined by a certain number of English, but on reaching Preston many of

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ment, but only interest. Walpole when he came to the Treasury inherited this scheme and developed it, with the idea of converting the National Debt (then nearly five millions) and paying a lower interest—5 per cent. instead of an average of 8 per cent. The scheme did not, of course, proceed from Walpole himself, but he was the Parliamentary responsible when the financiers produced it. For the privilege of certain monopolies in trade the South Sea Company would be willing to take over the annuities which formed the bulk of the National Debt. The annuitants would only get 5 per cent., instead of 8, but they would have the chance of the very large profits which were expected from the monopoly. The thing went through and was confirmed by Act of Parliament on April 7, 1720—a memorable date in English history.

There then arose the first of those fluctuations, sham appreciations in the value of paper promises followed by violent loss of value in the same paper promises, which have characterized all speculation from that time to this. Now, the characteristic of Walpole in the matter was not that his name stood at the origin; that was only a technicality—he happened to be the Parliamentary involved, he was not the creator of the idea. No, the interest of the South Sea Bubble in connection with Walpole was the fact that, like nearly everybody else in power, he had been 'let in on the ground floor'—he had acquired or been given a number of shares, knowing very well that the monopoly granted by Parliament would make those shares rise rapidly in value. They multiplied by ten in no time; there was a fever of speculation which pushed them up to this absurdly inflated quotation, *and Walpole sold at the top of the market.*

When he had safely sold out, making a large fortune out of the bamboozled public, he was careful to let the company sink in the universal panic which followed. The ruined annuitants and the great body of the duped public clamoured for victims. Many a politician went under upon proof that he had corruptly benefited by the boom—but not so Walpole. Walpole manœuvred with skill, allowing those to sink who could not help him, playing for the acquittal of those whom he thought might be of service, and thus he maintained his huge, ill-gotten fortune. By the next year, 1721, he was at the head of the Government and once more Chancellor of the Exchequer.

This date, April 3, 1721, is the foundational date of Walpole's

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career; he remained henceforward at the head of the Government and almost identical with it for twenty years.

**Walpole and the King.** George I of England, as the new Hanoverian King was now called, was exactly the person needed for firmly rooting aristocratic government and making the return of monarchy impossible. He was a coarse, brutal, stupid man, knowing not a word of English and caring nothing about England save for the income the country provided him and, to some extent, the title of royalty. There was still enough tradition of kingship remaining to make people think that Walpole managed the King—but he did not even take the trouble to do that. The King made no attempt to govern. When the next Parliament had to be called, at the end of the seven years, Walpole was able to direct the elections as he willed, and when the King died during a journey he was taking to Germany with his mistress, on June 12, 1727, the all-powerful minister had been governing without interruption for six years.

**Walpole's Foreign Policy.** Walpole's foreign policy, so far as it depended upon himself, was simple enough—he was determined to preserve peace for England, and France played into his hands. France, after the death of Louis XIV in 1715, had had a young child for King, Louis XV, and for Regent the child's cousin, the Duke of Orleans. The Regent and those who surrounded him were as much determined as Walpole to avoid war. The perpetual conflicts of the last reign, ending as they did in the maintenance of the Bourbon Spanish succession, had raised France to a very high position—the most populous and the best-organized state in Europe. But she was exhausted and required time to recuperate. Moreover, there was no acute cause of conflict between the English governing class, merchants and squires, on the one hand and the French monarchy on the other.

We must be careful not to antedate things in history. We, who know what was coming, tend to think of the whole eighteenth century as a struggle for maritime and colonial power between France and England, including the struggle for India; but all that only appears in the latter part of the eighteenth century, it does not belong to the earlier part. What did happen in this earlier part of the eighteenth century was growth of London's money-power.

England under Walpole was increasing rapidly in wealth and

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fairly rapidly in population: but what was increasing still more rapidly was the proportion which liquid wealth bore to the whole wealth of the community—and this was to prove a most important point later on. England, though still mainly an agricultural community, had long possessed, in the City of London, a body of financiers who disposed of ready money in a proportion much larger than their colleagues in any other country except Holland; and now England was passing Holland. Not only was English commerce rising as well as the English financial system, but the active part of the nation, that which determined opinion and moved policy, was essentially commercial and centred in the City. The Peace of Utrecht had given England special rights in trading with the Spanish Empire, and a monopoly in the slave trade; meanwhile the English colonies on the North American coast were increasing very rapidly in numbers. The French settlement of Canada along the St Lawrence numbered, even at the end of this period (after nearly forty years of the eighteenth century), not more than 40,000 souls, but the English colonists to the south of Canada along the Atlantic coast had multiplied in the same time from a quarter of a million to one million. In India two companies, one English and the other French, shared the hitherto limited trade between them, and still without violent rivalry—the time was yet to come when the attempt to dominate the native princes should be made by the French and immediately afterwards copied by the English, and when—side by side with a political change—a great increase in trade with the East and in the importance of the Indian question should arise.

**George II.** In the midst of this long peace of Walpole's the second Hanoverian Prince, George II, succeeded quietly on the death of his father. He was somewhat superior to that father from having inherited the more refined character of his mother, an adulteress upon whom George I had taken terrible vengeance.<sup>1</sup> He was a vigorous little man with a beef-steak face and most courageous. He was supported by a wife of considerable character and attainments, Caroline of Anspach, who kept in touch with the best thought in Protestant Europe, holding especially to a friendship with Leibnitz. She understood England, which was more than her husband did, and of

<sup>1</sup> George I burned his wife's lover in an oven, but (it seems certain) only after he had had the man assassinated.

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course allied herself with Walpole, who repaid the compliment by doubling her private allowance out of the English taxes.

In Parliament Bolingbroke, who had returned, was far the strongest figure in the Opposition. He perhaps alone understood what the reign of Walpole meant, and how, under it, England was more and more rooted in the oligarchic government which he deplored. But the position of Walpole, strong as it was, was further strengthened by his creation for the first time of a homogeneous Cabinet, after what was to be later the accepted type for many generations.

Hitherto the King had theoretically chosen his own ministers, and had in part actually done so; for at least the Crown had a voice in the matter. The ministers were taken from various groups, and each could call himself (and, if he were of a belated type of mind, actually think himself) a particular servant of the Crown: not responsible to his colleagues. The strength of the opposition to a Bill of Walpole's—the Excise Bill—gave him the opportunity, in 1733, to suggest to George II and the Queen the importance of having a united Ministry: in other words, of still further increasing the power of the Prime Minister. The inclusion of Lord Chesterfield was made the test. He was one of Walpole's clique, and his office that of Lord Steward of the Household, which office he had used independently of his master to oppose the Excise Bill. On April 13, 1733, he was dismissed. In the next year Walpole finally broke Bolingbroke's efforts to restore the older spirit of the country; he managed the elections of that year with success—for, though his majority was diminished, it remained a majority. Bolingbroke, who was now fifty-six, gave up the struggle and retired to France; he came back to England as a man of seventy-three, but lived in a retirement which he used well, in various literary works, of which the greatest—which might have been ultimately of profound effect—contained *The Idea of a Patriot King*.

Walpole was further characteristic of his time in the attitude he took towards English commerce. He renewed the monopoly of the East India Company, giving it another thirty years' lease of life: the whole of this long peace was, indeed, a quiet extension of English financial and colonial power, undisturbed save by certain rivalries with the French in the lonely and almost unpeopled backwoods of America which would grow into an important conflict later on.

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**The Decline of Walpole.** The decline of Walpole was slow and in no way disastrous. He remains identified with the government of the country for many years after the summit of his power. Frederick, George II's son, the Prince of Wales, was having the usual quarrel with his father; the dismissed Chesterfield strengthened the Opposition, which also raked in as a supporter a young man of very remarkable talent, twenty-seven years of age, William Pitt, the member for Old Sarum—a constituency remarkable as one more example of a borough without voters. This young man's oratory impressed the House on the first occasion of his speaking there, and it was directed, of course, against Walpole. The end of the year 1737 and the beginning of the year 1738 saw the strengthening of the attack against him under the Prince of Wales, Chesterfield, and all that group; and the Prime Minister was further weakened by the death of the Queen and by the outbreak, in spite of him, of a foolish war—the very opposite of what he would have desired.

**The War of Jenkins's Ear.** This was the Spanish war of 1739, popularly known as the War of Jenkins's Ear. The commercial community was irritated with Spain because that country had begun instituting stricter search for contraband in English vessels trading with her dominions. A certain sea-captain, Jenkins, came forward with a story of Spanish cruelty in which he said he had lost his ear—and he produced the ear wrapped up in cotton. London suffered a mild attack of one of those fits of nationalist madness which break out at intervals, Walpole gave way (not without a threat of resignation), and, though he still had a majority, war began in 1739 with an attack (before the declaration of hostilities) upon Portobello. The news of Portobello reached Europe in March 1740, and was magnified by those who opposed Walpole into a great victory. By the next year the whole thing was an admitted failure. Early in 1741 a great fleet, over a hundred ships, of which one-third were ships of the line, failed first in an attempt on Cartagena, then in an attempt on Santiago, in Cuba. There had been very heavy losses, efforts at unpopular conscriptions of seamen—and in general a breakdown of the whole affair.

But this War of Jenkins's Ear was only the introduction to a thing of far greater moment, an event upon which was to turn all the future history of Europe. This was no less than the capital diplomatic blunder made, not so much by the French

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monarchy, as by French opinion imposing itself upon a reluctant King; it coincided with the last months of Walpole's power, for in the new Parliament which met in 1741 small majorities began to appear against him, his members were unseated on petition, and in early 1742 he allowed it to be known that he would soon resign; a majority of sixteen appeared against him, and on February 11, 1742, he gave up all his offices and retired with a peerage, to which he had nominated himself, under the title of Orford. This date, February 11, 1742, may be taken as the turn of that period to which Walpole gives his name in our history, and the beginning of the rapid rise of England against France.

## THE INCREASE OF ENGLAND

### PITT

**The Great French Diplomatic Blunder.** Walpole's long period of peace, broken only by the futile error of the Spanish war, had been a period apparently uncreative. Socially it was squalid in character; English lyric poetry seemed dead, as did the old chivalry and the traditions thereof; Ireland would seem to have been successfully killed, and religion to have lost its soul. But the period, though supine, was one of repose and preparation. Population and commerce were steadily growing, as were, very rapidly, the English colonies beyond the Atlantic. There was to follow for England a period of expansion which continued uninterruptedly till the end of the nineteenth century. Some would even say that it continued into the twentieth—as, indeed, it did if one counts the acreage nominally attached to the English Crown, or the population at home, or the figures of commerce. At any rate, for more than a hundred and fifty years the expansion was prodigious and never had doubts of itself; its origins are to be found in the group of years surrounding the end of Walpole's administration.

Such an expansion in English numbers, domination, finance, commerce, and new industrial methods of production by machinery—all of which were closely combined—would have taken place anyhow in some degree, probably in a great degree, but the initial step from which all the rest followed was due to a certain historical accident of great moment. This was the

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diplomatic blunder committed by the French, the chief rivals of England.

The circumstances of that blunder were as follows :

Charles VI, head of the house of Habsburg, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, died in November 1740 without a male heir. He had caused a number of states to agree that his daughter Maria Theresa, who married Francis of Lorraine, should be regarded as his heir, and in order to obtain this recognition of her he had made many concessions. It was certain, however, that when he died her inheritance would be challenged. The possessions of her father, the Emperor, had been built up in all sorts of ways, principally by inheritance through various marriages. They included the original dominions of the house of Austria, with its capital at Vienna, but also the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Catholic Netherlands, with their capital at Brussels, the Kingdom of Hungary, Silesia, and other portions.

Now, French diplomacy had inherited for two centuries one unchanging policy of antagonism to the house of Austria. The Empire had been the unifying principle of the whole Germanic body, and the Empire weighed upon France from the east as a perpetual menace. To support the enemies of Austria whenever a conflict arose had been the necessary and invariable tradition of the French monarchy. But the moment had come when wisdom demanded that this tradition should be abandoned. The Empire had weakened out of all knowledge, it was no longer connected in blood with the Spanish dominions, it no longer had any real hold upon the Germans outside the private domain of the house of Habsburg. It was no longer southern Catholic Germany which was to be opposed; northern and Protestant Germany was beginning to grow: and England would be its natural ally. Protestant England would challenge the French efforts at creating a great Asiatic trade and an American colonial one; Protestant Prussia, which had got its independence from Poland, was about to enter European affairs as the most thoroughly organized military state.

It is the consistent lesson of history that those who have been very great, and have established their greatness through a long-continued policy over many generations, will nearly always prolong that policy when it has ceased to be useful and when it has become demonstrably harmful to them. Nations, like men, decline through the same qualities as made them rise.

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So it was now with France. Her policy should have been to support Maria Theresa against a host of enemies, and especially to support her against Prussia. Instead of that, the mass of French educated opinion saw nothing in Maria Theresa's troubles but an opportunity for one more attack on the house of Austria, and a further weakening thereof. The King was of the opposite and right opinion—he was for turning round and helping the Empress; so was his aged minister of genius, Fleury; but they could not—or, at any rate, *did* not—act against the general spirit about them, and they allowed France to ally herself with the rising power of Prussia against Maria Theresa.

France having taken one side, England could not but take the other, and was engaged throughout Europe and on the high seas and in America in the War of the Austrian Succession. It lasted seven years, and when it was over, though the immediate consequences were not very great, the foundations had been laid for that expansion of England which was to follow, mainly at the expense of France. The French later reversed their false diplomatic move, and attempted to recover their lost ground, but it was too late. A diplomatic blunder at a critical moment has consequences which cannot be undone by merely reversing engines.

**William Pitt.** (Just as the first twenty-five years of the Hanoverian succession are connected with the name of Robert Walpole, so the twenty odd years after Walpole's period are connected with the name of William Pitt.) Of the two men Pitt stands less completely for his period than Walpole does for his, partly because Pitt's time was so much more filled with national movements and expansion (which he largely directed), and partly because many more factors were at work than in Walpole's time; partly also because Pitt had not for a long time—hardly, indeed, during the whole of his life—all the personal advantages which Walpole had enjoyed. But the parallel between the two men is fairly close, and the name of Pitt marks a natural sequel to the name of Walpole. Like Walpole, he came of the squires; he had Walpole's Eton and university education; like Walpole, he entered Parliament young; like Walpole, he rose at first by patronage, and, like Walpole, consolidated it by accumulating a fortune (less than Walpole's)—without which, of course, he would not have counted in that world. His fortune was acquired

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less disreputably than Walpole's (still, it was not without unpleasant elements): but for the rest he was a man of far greater talents than Walpole, he had fire in him, he was a great orator, and he could conceive and conduct a really constructive policy—which in his case was entirely directed to the expansion of England. Behind him all the while was the money power of the City under the Bank of England.

(The period to which we may attach the name of Pitt runs from the time of his first operations against Walpole at the end of that politician's career to the final loss of the American colonies in 1783. (Pitt had already been dead more than three years when Yorktown surrendered (that date, October 19, 1781, was the virtual end of the American War of Independence) and over five years when the treaty was signed which acknowledged the independence of the United States, on September 3, 1783—for Pitt died in May 1778. Nevertheless the period as a whole should be called by his name, and its prime achievement, the fixing of the English domination in India, is, coupled with the new industrial system and the sudden growth of the urban population, the first phase in the increase of England, the second phase being that of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.)

(This first phase to which we attach the name of Pitt falls into two main chapters, both of them filled with the struggle against France: the first was the War of the Austrian Succession, and the second that Seven Years War of which Pitt was himself the inspiring genius on the English side and from which dates the maritime supremacy of this country.)

**The War of the Austrian Succession.** (In the War of the Austrian Succession, which confirmed Maria Theresa upon the Imperial throne and gave her husband, Francis of Lorraine, his Imperial title, England only plays a subsidiary part. The major factor in the whole affair was Frederick of Prussia. He had inherited what was for its size the best army in Europe, he had himself a genius for command in the field, he had sufficient resources for his enterprise, and he introduced for the first time into the affairs of Christendom the principle of mere force. He was ready to break any treaty, to disregard any international right. The French had allied themselves with Prussia, as we have seen, from the mere momentum of anti-Austrian tradition. Frederick himself was controlled by nothing so irrational. He treated separately and

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secretly with Maria Theresa, and abruptly abandoned the alliance in June 1742, leaving the French in the air, with their armies in the midst of the Germanies, unsupported. They retreated with difficulty from Bohemia, after Louis XV's aged minister Fleury had made one last attempt to undo the blunder into which he had unwillingly been led—for he had appealed to Maria Theresa to treat; she had rejected his support, and Fleury shortly afterwards died. (In 1743, as the English Government and Hanover as well were supporting Maria Theresa, George II successfully fought his way out of a trap at Dettingen—a battle in which he inflicted with his combined English and German troops far heavier casualties than he received. A last and more violent effort on the part of the English Ministry, to be carried out in Flanders, failed after a fashion which made more noise at the time than it was worth; and the French, determined to retrieve an international position in which they had badly entangled themselves, invaded the Low Countries in force, took town after town, and in 1745 besieged Tournai, the most important of the citadels. A force of 50,000 men, mainly consisting of Dutch and English, but with Hanoverians as well, marched from Brussels to relieve Tournai. There was a much larger contingent of British present than was usual in these Continental wars—at least one-third of the total, nearly 17,000 men—and they were led by the King's son, the Duke of Cumberland, a young man of twenty-four. At a battle which takes its name from the little village of Fontenoy, outside Tournai, Cumberland was completely defeated: and it was noted that the decisive point in the battle was the charge delivered by the exiled Irish against the troops of the Hanoverian prince. The remainder of the war was of little effect, though it was marked by yet another defeat of the Anglo-Dutch at Lauffeldt, and peace was concluded in 1748. But meanwhile an exaggerated idea of the effects of Fontenoy in the lowering of English power led to the last and greatest of the Jacobite efforts at a Stuart restoration.

**The Forty-five.** Fontenoy had been fought in the second week of May 1745; early in June Charles Edward, the son of James III and grandson of James II, a young man only just entering his twenty-fourth year, sailed from the mouth of the Loire for Scotland. He landed in the Hebrides after a long voyage, and raised his standard a fortnight later, on August 19. The Hanoverian forces in Scotland were insufficient at that

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moment; Prince Charles had about 3000 men, mainly Highlanders, and he occupied Edinburgh. The Hanoverian forces, somewhat less than his own, engaged with the legitimist body at dawn on September 21 (1745) on the level of Prestonpans, east of Edinburgh. The Highlanders charged and rolled up the forces of the German King of England, capturing his treasure and six of his guns. Prince Charles then delayed more than a month, during which he received assurances of support from France and from England, but when he marched down southward for the border he had not more than 10,000 men (half of them mounted) and thirteen guns. Of this force he lost some daily by desertion—he had lost perhaps one-fifth by the time he entered Carlisle, in the middle of November—and meanwhile the Hanoverian forces were gathering in front and to the side of him. Cumberland had returned from France to undertake the campaign. The Hanoverian forces now available were already superior in numbers to the invaders, while reinforcements were marching to join Cumberland from Yorkshire. The Prince got as far as Derby on December 4, but the position was impossible unless there should be a rising in his favour, and of this there was no sign. It is often said that a bold march on London by Prince Charles would have succeeded. It is doubtful. The people were apathetic. The Hanoverian dynasty was not popular, but it had behind it all the organized forces of the country, and was identified with the money power of the City, especially the Bank of England, and the security of most of the landowners.

A retreat was ordered, the border was recrossed within three weeks, but the Prince found certain reinforcements when he reached Scotland, notably a few hundred regulars from France, and he was able to lay siege to Stirling in the first days of the next year, 1746, though he was not in sufficient strength to meet Cumberland, who had reached Edinburgh before the end of January. Prince Charles therefore made for the Highlands. The clash between him and Cumberland came at Culloden, near Inverness, where the last charge of the Highland clans failed on April 16. Prince Charles escaped with his life after a long series of perilous adventures, and the Stuart cause had perished.

The effects of this rising and its defeat were considerable. Till that moment there had lingered a strong Stuart tradition even in England, and, of course, a much stronger one in

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Scotland; further, that tradition had been vaguely associated, especially in England, with lingering memories of Catholicism. In numbers those Englishmen who still openly called themselves Catholic were reduced to a very small body, though in many families vague traditions of Catholicism remained. After the Forty-five all that disappeared. Only the oldest men could remember the reign of James II. Those who had been young men in his service were now approaching or past their eightieth year, and the Forty-five was the end of English Catholicism properly so called as much as it was the end of the Stuarts. A hundred years later was to appear a new but restricted English Catholic movement, owing its first seeds to French refugee priests, its later vitality in part to an intellectual movement among a few English scholars, but much more to Irish immigration. What the Forty-five did was to break for ever the continuity of the last Catholic remnants in England with the Catholic past of the country.

**The Truce.** The War of the Austrian Succession ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in October 1748. The great diplomatic blunder of the French had resulted in their naval exhaustion, in the fruitless glory of Fontenoy, and in the loss of seven years in the race now set for the expansion of wealth and dominion beyond the Atlantic and in India. That handicap the French never caught up. The immediate territorial changes resulting from the war were insignificant, but the moral effect was very great. Prussia, though still small, was now proved to have the best military system in Europe, and to have proclaimed a novel international morality which made her as formidable as she was detested. The maritime possibilities of England had been made clear, reposing as she did on a financial system unhampered by any threat from over a land frontier. Holland henceforward ceased to rank as one of the chief Powers. But beyond these more obvious things there was an underlying thing of the greatest importance, clearly seen by a few men at the time, though not grasped by public opinion—the duel between France and England which was bound to be taken up again, and in which the ensuing eight years were but a truce, would depend for its issue upon the contrasting economic conditions of the two countries.

France had the greater total population and the greater total wealth, her numbers being more than double, or nearer three

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times, those of England: but the wealth of England was mobile and concentrated in fewer hands, and its direction in fewer still. The dispossession of the English people from their land, which had been going on continuously for two generations, had already produced a considerable proletariat—that is, cheap labour and the beginnings of the capitalist system. In France the exact opposite had happened—the peasants had already become in the main the owners of their land or tenants on long and very low customary leases, and the property of the middle class was well divided. The English squire in his country house was a man of many hundreds or some few thousands of pounds a year, drawn from the rents of the village land, of which he was always the principal and often the only possessor. The corresponding small noble in France in his *château* had, from dues and the rest, an average income of some £200 a year only from one parish or manor; the balance was in the hands of those who in England would have been small farmers paying a competitive rent or labourers at a wage. Further, England had a banking system already fully developed, which the French had not; and, in general, whether for the levying of taxation or for the rapid gathering of large capital for one concentrated effort, all the advantage lay with English society as against French.

Another moral factor of the first importance must be noted. All the directing forces of English society were unitedly fixed towards one object, the extension of commerce and wealth; and for this adventures overseas—colonial in America and military in India—were essential. But in France there was divided counsel. The so-called ‘philosophers,’ the writers and thinkers who were beginning to count for so much in that country, were almost unanimous in doubting the value of expansion overseas. They maintained that foreign plantations and military posts established far from the mother country could never be permanently governed from the centre, while Europeans thus expatriated would, they said, degenerate and also become alien to the original European type.

Many modern men would now say that they were right, but for at least a century and a half after their time the enrichment of a European country by its adventures overseas was to prove so great that the anti-imperialist school seemed manifestly wrong. We must add to this the fact that the French were divided between the policy of yielding something to their

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European enemies in order to increase their maritime and colonial power, and the opposite policy of abandoning trans-oceanic ambition for the sake of permanent strength in Europe, which will always be the heart of our civilization.

**The Eight Years.** These eight years of truce are filled, as to domestic policy, with the intrigues and counter-intrigues of the very rich men who controlled England. The story of those intrigues, the use the various rivals made of the foreign German prince who was their nominal head, George II, and of his son and his son's family, are tedious and of little purpose to the history of England. Behind them all is the increasing commercial prosperity and increasing financial and banking power—but also the personality of that one politician of a different calibre from the rest, William Pitt. He was in the midst of the intrigues, like all the rest; he rises and falls in Parliament, like the rest, but he makes himself more and more indispensable, and when the great European war which was to change the destinies of England broke out he soon became the acting head of the state. Frederick of Prussia spotted him, and said that the English had found a man.

Until this happens, until Pitt is in full control, three things<sup>1</sup> must be noted, but two of them must be noted without antedating their importance or exaggerating it. These two things we must notice without antedating their importance or exaggerating them are the *beginnings* of European political control in India, still disputed between England and France, and the *beginnings* of a struggle between the English people and the French in North America. The third thing, which is at once a symptom and a cause of English financial superiority at the time, was the Conversion of the Debt.

(1) *India.* Hitherto, until the forties of the eighteenth century, neither the French nor the English in India aimed at political power. Each had its trading company, which was concerned only with commerce and which accepted the political rule of the native princes. But a man of genius, Dupleix, discovered in the accidents of negotiation that the stiffening of a native force

<sup>1</sup> To this period also belongs the belated acceptance in England of the reformed Gregorian calendar, or 'New Style.' It had already been accepted by all Europe (including Scotland) except Russia, but as it had been a Papal reform made in Elizabeth's reign the successive English Governments refused to accept it. They did so now by the statute 24 Geo. II, passed in 1751. By this eleven days were left out after September 2, 1752.

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by a very few white troops and the direction of action by white officers could overcome almost any number of unaided natives. By skill in handling the native rulers and pitting them one against the other, by defending those Indians whom he favoured against those whom he desired to exclude, he was soon on the way to making the French masters of the south-eastern coast of India.

After Dupleix's example, and late in his career, a young clerk of the English company, Robert Clive, took up similar adventures with a similar success. But the schemes of Dupleix did not suit the ideas of the French Government, which had no ambition for political domination in India, thinking it an error to mix up such an object with the opportunities of trade. Later they changed their mind, but for the moment they recalled Dupleix—in 1754. Clive went home about the same time, but he returned in 1755; the important part of his career and the definite establishment of English superiority over French in the Indian peninsula dates from 1756, which is also the opening year of that decisive episode, the Seven Years War.

(2) *The New World*. In America the situation was as follows : The valley and estuary of the St Lawrence, with the exception of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, were in the hands of the French under the title of Canada. It was but a thin belt of sparsely inhabited territory with a very severe climate, and counted during this period at the most some 40,000 inhabitants. But the French also had explored, sent missionaries among the natives, and established widely separated posts farther west, along the line of the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi valley. Their numbers in these enormous unexplored spaces were quite insignificant, nor were they preparing to proceed to any considerable settlement. The English-speaking colonies, on the other hand, including the descendants of the Dutch in New York and a certain number of other non-English settlers, held all the good land along the seaboard in a chain of separate but contiguous colonies, and *their* numbers were already in the neighbourhood of a million.

Trade with them, the increase in their numbers and therefore of their produce, also the increase in the area they could occupy, was a prime object of English policy. The colonials themselves clashed with the French outposts in and beyond the long wooded belt of the Alleghany range. The French also had a fort at

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Ticonderoga, holding the great trench of the Hudson and Lake Champlain, which cut the English colonial system in two. They had a fort where Pittsburgh now stands, called Fort Duquesne, to hold the Ohio valley, down which communications from Canada went westward. So far the only economic value of these vast untouched territories was the traffic in skins: but, insignificant as it was, it led to clashes between the trappers of the two systems, French and English, and all the while there was an intense desire on the part of the colonials, and especially the Virginians, to push westward into the claims which the French had already staked out.

The first irregular efforts at doing this were not successful; an attempt to rush Fort Duquesne by Braddock was badly defeated, and Washington, then a young man, was compelled to capitulate in a similar effort. But all the weight of numbers and a determined mother country were behind the effort of the colonials to push westward into the empty French zone; not because they desired to occupy it—they were still amply engaged in developing what they had—but because they felt it would be a barrier to their further progress later on. As in the case of India, we, who know how important all this was to become in later years, tend to exaggerate the beginnings of the affair. It is bad historical perspective to do so. Up to the Seven Years War nothing was decided, and it was upon the fate of what should happen in that *European* struggle that the issues in America and India would depend.

(3) *The Conversion of the Debt.* The Conversion of the Debt was as follows. The public debt at the beginning of the 'truce' was £78,000,000; the charge for interest was £3,000,000—out of a total revenue of only £8,500,000. That England should then enjoy a public revenue of much more than £1 per head of the nation was sufficiently remarkable, and a proof of her commercial and financial expansion; but only one-sixth of that revenue fell as a direct tax upon the wealthier classes. It was the object of those classes (who were governing the country) to support a still smaller burden, and the City found itself able to save half a million a year on the annual debt charge. It did so on June 1, 1752, by a successful conversion. It was proposed to pay the bondholders  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. only until the year 1758, and after that only 3 per cent. So large was the amount of accumulated capital seeking for employment in the City of London that it

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was easy to borrow at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and thus to pay off the debt (for there turned out to be few who were not content with such a return for their money). The whole thing was an excellent proof of the expanding and secure position of England and her finances at a moment when the country had spent £30,000,000 on a recent war, and had been able to subsidize her allies—and when her rivals and allies as well had been crippled by the struggle. For England alone was under no necessity to raise large armies for service on land, and the increasing maldistribution of wealth made it increasingly easy to raise the resources of government from taxation.

The reason of this truth—that badly distributed wealth yields more in taxation than well-distributed wealth—is clear. Where you have one man with £10,000 a year and a thousand other men serving him at £100 a year you can easily take in taxation from that one man's £10,000 a year, say, £2000, one-fifth; but where you distribute wealth evenly and have to deal with a thousand independent families at £110 a year each, it would be impossible to tax in the same proportion: a man with £110 a year cannot pay £22 a year in taxes.

**The Seven Years War.** The Seven Years War is one of the most important political events, not only in the history of England, but of Europe and the world. It secured the superiority of England at sea, which half a lifetime later became her *invincibility* at sea, and the consequent command of the sea for a hundred and fifty years. It drove the French Government out of North America, and by driving the same Government out of India it left all that vast economic field open to English enterprise alone. More important than all this, even to the fate of England herself and obviously to the world at large, was the effect the war had upon the standing of Prussia. Prussia henceforward became the power to which the German race looked more and more for its leadership. Protestant Berlin slowly ousted Catholic Vienna as the centre of German life. It was the victory of Prussia, moreover, in the Seven Years War which, by crippling French financial resources, left England so manifestly superior at sea, with all the consequences of that superiority.

The beginnings of the struggle were irregular. Without a declaration of war the English Government had embarked upon a certain amount of sea-fighting to embarrass the French approaches to their colonies on the St Lawrence and their posts

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west to the Alleghanies. But these skirmishes and captures (which the French have always called irregular) were not the causes of the war, for England neither could nor would have followed them up with regular warfare single-handed. Her commerce would never have tolerated such a risk. What determined the affair was a master-stroke of English diplomacy, always to be set in contrast to that great blunder in French diplomacy which had taken place fourteen years before.

The growing power of Prussia, which became so clear in the last war (that of the Austrian Succession), when she acted as the ally of France, had alarmed the Empress of Russia, Prussia's neighbour. The English Government approached the Empress of Russia for an alliance; they then communicated to Prussia the fact that they were acting thus, which was as much as to say, "Either join with us in the coming struggle, or find yourself caught between English sea-power, Hanoverian action on the Continent, that of anyone else we may subsidize on the other side, and the Russian armies to the east of you." Frederick the Great grasped the position at once; he offered his alliance to England without giving the French, to whom he was still allied, any warning; and this understanding, drawn up in the Treaty of Westminster on January 16, 1756, was the beginning of all that followed. English diplomacy had won the war before it began.

The French were moved, rather slowly, to do what they ought to have done years before—to change their whole diplomatic tradition and ally themselves with Austria in order to meet the Prussian menace. By this alliance there appeared more distinctly what has since been an underlying main fact in European affairs—the line of cleavage between the Catholic culture and the Protestant. Berlin and London were the two foci of the Protestant culture in Europe; Vienna and Paris of the Catholic.

The Austrian alliance was not, however, due to the foresight of the French diplomatists; it was due to the eagerness of Maria Theresa's ministers to have support against Prussia. They had been angling for it long before England and Prussia had joined together, for they could never get over the violent seizure of Silesia by Frederick. The French were hard to persuade (though their King, Louis XV, as usual, saw things clearly), for there was a very strong body of highly educated opinion in France, including the most effective writers (who were already leading

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the thought of that country), in favour of Prussia, and in reaction against Catholicism generally—a feeling strong enough for their philosophical leanings to effect their foreign policy. It was not till May 1756 that a definite alliance between France and Austria was made, and then it was a weak one, the French promising only 24,000 men—and only then in case of Prussian aggression. But this “diplomatic revolution” (as it was called) was enough; within three weeks England had declared war against France. In August 1756 Frederick suddenly and without warning invaded Saxony and arbitrarily seized its armed forces, adding them to his own—an act which set fire to all Europe.

Even so, the French delayed through the winter, and it was not till the following spring, the month of May 1757, that France and Austria formed a serious and strong alliance with the outspoken purpose of “having done with the Prussian menace,” and the French were pledged to raise immediately 100,000 men for that purpose. But meanwhile the war seemed to open favourably for the French power. Minorca, which the former treaties had given to England, an island whose magnificent harbour of Port Mahon dominated the western Mediterranean, was invaded by the French and the English governor there besieged. Admiral Byng, going to relieve it, got his fleet entangled and his first ships badly mauled, and, having been unable to continue with the inferior remnant, retired. Minorca was lost to England, and Byng was shot for cowardice and treason—sacrificed to unjust popular clamour; it is noteworthy that Pitt did what he could to save him. Again, after the Prussian act of brigandage against Saxony Frederick, marching against the armies of Maria Theresa, was badly defeated at Kolin, in Bohemia, while in the western Germanies the French armies pushed the Duke of Cumberland up against the estuary of the Elbe and compelled him to surrender with his German troops in the Capitulation of Klosterseven.

Here the French committed another blunder. They allowed the defeated troops to go free. They did not march straight, as they should have done, against Berlin. The English Government refused to accept the capitulation, and the Hanoverians were again free to act. After this the tide of war turned. At Rossbach (November 5, 1757) 24,000 French, acting with a mixed body of 31,000 Germans drawn from separate smaller districts of the Empire, were wholly defeated by Frederick of

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Prussia, though he met them with only half the numbers opposed to him. The disaster was due to the separation of the Franco-Imperial forces, who tried to use their superiority of numbers for an outflanking movement which was bungled, so that Frederick could crush his opponents in detail.

**The Effects of Rossbach.** One can put one's finger on Rossbach as the decisive battle of the war, and, indeed, of the eighteenth century previous to the French Revolution. The French were compelled to further exertions which did not permit them to recover, but did exhaust their already badly entangled national finances. England was amply able to finance Prussia, and did so; France no longer had the financial strength to fight successfully on land or maintain her strength at sea.

Frederick had to meet three converging enemies after this, Austria from the south, France from the west, Russia from the east—all told, they were three to two, compared with Frederick's armies. But they were separated, while Frederick held the interior position and could deal with them in detail. He was amply provided with English money, and the quality of his forces, as of his own generalship, was superior to those of any one of his enemies. Napoleon, whose admiration for Frederick the Great knew no bounds, summed up the position when he said that the marvels achieved by the Prussian King could be explained by these factors in his favour. Frederick suffered a further defeat in August 1759 at the hands of the Austrians and Russians, but the allies were divided in their objects, Austria thinking only of Silesia and Russia remaining doubtful. The issue had really been decided at Rossbach.

With the French thus financially crippled, as well as having all their energies drawn into the European struggle, English sea-power was triumphant and could do what it willed. It had now behind it the driving-force of Pitt, who had emerged as the leader of his country in the war, with an intense and united popular backing. His control dates from the early summer of 1757. It was he who repudiated the Convention of Klosterseven, he who put a better commander (Ferdinand of Brunswick) at the head of the Hanoverian army, and above all he who achieved the conquest of Canada.

Expeditions against the coast of France itself failed, but all the year 1759 was a list of English successes. The French were beaten at Minden by a mixed body of English and Hanoverian

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troops in August; and immediately afterwards (September 13) Quebec, which the French had been unable in their loss of sea-power sufficiently to reinforce, was taken by Wolfe, who was killed in the action, as was also his French opponent, Montcalm. It is to be noted that Pitt was the man who discovered and used Wolfe, a young man of only thirty-three when he died. Montreal was captured the year after (1760), and the whole weight of the English resources in North America was at work against the hopelessly insufficient defence of the isolated French.

It was this sea-power of England, free to act, which also decided the fate of India. Clive had already defeated a large native army at Plassey, in Bengal, in 1757. A French attempt to recover their position, led by the son of an Irish refugee, Lally, failed against the superiority of the English power at sea in 1758; by the same power Madras, which now he besieged, was relieved in 1759, and another naval effort by the French failed. In the first days of 1760 Sir Eyre Coote finally defeated Lally; Pondicherry, the principal French commercial settlement, surrendered; it was restored, but, from the spring of 1761, the monopoly of English commerce for the future in the East Indies was achieved.

Maria Theresa had long despaired of success, and the war ended with the Treaty of Paris, signed on February 10, 1763. The French had lost the fruits of all their colonial efforts in the East and West; the English were masters throughout North America, where no further resistance could be offered to their colonial expansion, and had for the future no European rivals in their gradual acquisition of complete political power over India. Such were the fruits of Rossbach.

**Character and Failure of George III.** While the Seven Years War was in full swing, and at the height of the English and Prussian successes therein, George II died, and his grandson, "the boy of German character, florid and virtuous, too fat at twenty-three," succeeded, on Saturday, October 25, 1760. Being young, there was put into his head the idea of acting upon Bolingbroke's model, "the Patriot King"—in other words, it was proposed to give some substance to the remaining shadow of monarchy.

The proposition could not but fail. But the word 'king' still had some weight in it; there was the power of choosing ministers and influencing government in many other ways,

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including the purchase of votes in the House of Commons: so the effort was made. Throughout his whole very long reign, which, including the episodes of madness, covered sixty years, the abortive and almost comic effort to restore something of the kingly power against the wealthier classes continued as an idea—but an idea with no chance of effect in action.

At this beginning of the reign, however, it did make some disturbance; it interfered with the supremacy of Pitt, who resigned again in the year after the King's accession; it put in power Bute, the favourite and perhaps the lover of the King's mother, and later others, who were the King's supporters. Some have thought that but for the disasters which were to come in America the reign might have achieved some small measure of monarchic restoration; that is improbable and wholly conjectural. At any rate, before the trouble in America began a certain wealthy rake and member of the House of Commons, John Wilkes, taking advantage of the unpopularity of the Peace of Paris (the triumph of which even Pitt opposed, in his desire for more than had been obtained and for continuing to support Prussia), began pamphleteering against the King personally, in his paper *The North Briton*. When his papers were seized he brought an action against the officers of the state, and he had popular support, going even to the length of riot, and the Lord Chief Justice summed up strongly in his favour. A legal and constitutional point was raised on the question of general warrants—that is, the right of the executive to arrest an individual unnamed or without defining a specific cause; it is only of antiquarian interest nowadays that the state is all-powerful, but the upshot of the whole affair showed the impotence of the Crown as a (nominal) executive in England to stand up to the aristocratic temper, as it had now become, of the English people. But, though the Wilkes affair dragged on for a long time, its interest was soon eclipsed by the opening troubles in the American Colonies.

**The Beginnings of the United States.** What we are about to follow, the separation of England from her transatlantic colonies, was to be decisive in a very important issue affecting the whole of our civilization, but particularly the nature of English power for the future. The question which the success of the American War of Independence was to put runs thus: Is a state the stronger for unity and centralization, or no?

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Is the power of a nation to be measured by the vague and general influence of its language and institutions, more or less modified, in widespread and scattered regions; or rather by the preservation of its united personality?

After nearly two hundred years that issue is not yet decided; but it was what happened in America from 1764 onward that determined England to answer these questions in one fashion, while the rest of the world—including the United States themselves—proceeded to answer it in another. England, after she had lost her American Colonies, and through the influence of the lesson supposed to be taught by that loss, went the way of devolution and looser and looser control over the various parts of her dominions, actual and nominal; basing her strength upon the expansion of her language, religion, and ideas, however diluted, in distant places of a mixed blood; regarding commerce and finance as the basis of all her real power, and making an effort at strict control only for the purpose of coercing those, such as the Irish, who were felt to be directly antagonistic.

**The Colonial Revolt.** The colonial revolt originates in an act of the European Government under Grenville, dating from March 10, 1764. On that day Grenville brought before Parliament a list of port-dues applicable also to the colonial ports, while giving certain new advantages to colonial trade. At the same time he gave notice of a Stamp Act, by which stamp dues on written agreements would be payable in the Colonies. The wars already undertaken in defence of the colonials, and for relieving them of the French pressure to the west, could only be very insufficiently met by such dues; they were to be rather a small colonial contribution towards the expense of the effort which the Mother Country had made for the Colonies.

Yet the American Colonies of that day formed a large population, compared with that of the Mother Country. Great Britain had barely eight millions—a very large increase, by the way, in the course of the preceding lifetime—and the colonies had already more than three millions, excluding Negro slaves.

The new taxation was received as a matter of course in the English Parliament, and excited little interest there; but in the Colonies, and especially in Virginia, it roused violent protest. The protest was not so widespread as is sometimes imagined, but due, as is always the case at the beginning of successful movements, to an intensity of feeling in a minority; it was

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opposed by no corresponding intensity in the rest. The Assembly of Virginia published a declaration that *no external authority could impose a tax upon Virginians*, and a Congress was summoned to meet at New York, the most convenient geographical centre. Delegates from nine out of the thirteen colonies attended this Congress, which met on October 7, 1765, just before the date when the new taxes would come into play.

The Congress claimed the right of the Colonies to govern themselves in matters of taxation, and forwarded its declaration to the King. This most important step coincided with the manifest failure of the King's attempt to increase the power of the Crown at home; for, to begin with, his very insufficient mind was struck by madness at that moment, and, what was more, the chief advocates of aristocratic rule, the Whigs, assumed power, with Lord Rockingham as their official head.

Rockingham had a very able secretary called Edmund Burke, and had put him into Parliament. Burke was in favour of repealing the Stamp Act; Pitt, who had lost the direction of affairs early in the reign and had retired, returned to take part in that policy, and on February 22, 1766, the Stamp Act was repealed.

This yielding to threats was bound to have its effect. When Pitt (who was now known as Lord Chatham, from the title which he had given himself) replaced Rockingham real power was not in his hands—for he was too ill. Grafton, who acted for him, had the real power, and he, as First Lord of the Treasury, proposed that in place of the now lost stamp dues new import taxes should be imposed, one of which was a duty on tea. The Assembly of the colony of Massachusetts sent round a circular letter to all the other colonies protesting; the governor was ordered to dissolve that Assembly, whereupon it took the revolutionary step of continuing to sit despite the orders of the Crown. The quarrel simmered for two years, in the course of which Lord North entered the Ministry as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

North was an intelligent, good-natured man, with clear ideas as to what ought to be done in the circumstances, a typical aristocrat, a Tory; and he led that part of the Cabinet which knew its own mind and was determined to affirm the rights of the central government. He was also leader of the House of Commons. The King had had an attack of madness. His

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imbecility was now officially over, and he supported North when that Minister determined to relieve the colonies of any real burden of taxation, but to maintain one tax at least as a token of English rights. The particular tax chosen was this tax on tea, and in 1770 North became head of the Government. Had he been allowed to act unhampered things might have turned out otherwise than they did, but George III continually interfered. There followed a skirmish between the garrison and the citizens of Boston in which three of the latter were killed, and the centre of intense feeling was shifted from Virginia to Massachusetts. In the autumn of 1773 the first revolutionary act, as distinguished from the earlier revolutionary resolution, took place: a town meeting of the citizens of Boston issued an order, as though possessed of authority, in opposition to that of the regular Government. It forbade those who were to receive imports of the tea to take them, and on December 16 disguised citizens boarded the ships and threw the tea overboard. It should be noted that Adams, the leader of the local feeling in Boston, in his demand for a congress, dropped the word 'colonies' and substituted the word 'states.' A new Congress was suggested for the task of forming *an independent American Commonwealth*.

North acted at once; he closed the port of Boston in the spring of 1774, named a military governor, Gage (the son of Lord Gage), and proposed that prisoners arraigned for rebellion should be transported to England. This last point was declared by the colonists to be especially "intolerable."

The Virginians next moved in support of Massachusetts, and a Congress, now called *national*, met in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774; on the 8th of October following, after appealing to the French Canadians to throw in their lot with the rebels, it passed a resolution approving resistance and adjourned to the following year. North showed real capacity in his next suggestion, which was that the Colonies should freely tax themselves under the approbation of the English Government, and that beyond such freely voted supplies no tax should be imposed. But the colonials were already arming and training, or at least such of them as desired a conflict—for it is probable that the majority were either apathetic or opposed to civil war. But energy and determination were on the side of the minority—a large and resolute though fluctuating one—which was

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resolved to force the issue. On April 19, 1775, a body of Massachusetts militia fired on the regulars under Gage, who had had the task of surprising and destroying the munitions which were being gathered for the rebellion at Concord, near Boston. The skirmish took place at Lexington, four miles from Concord; Gage effected his object, but lost two hundred out of 2000 men on his way back to Boston.

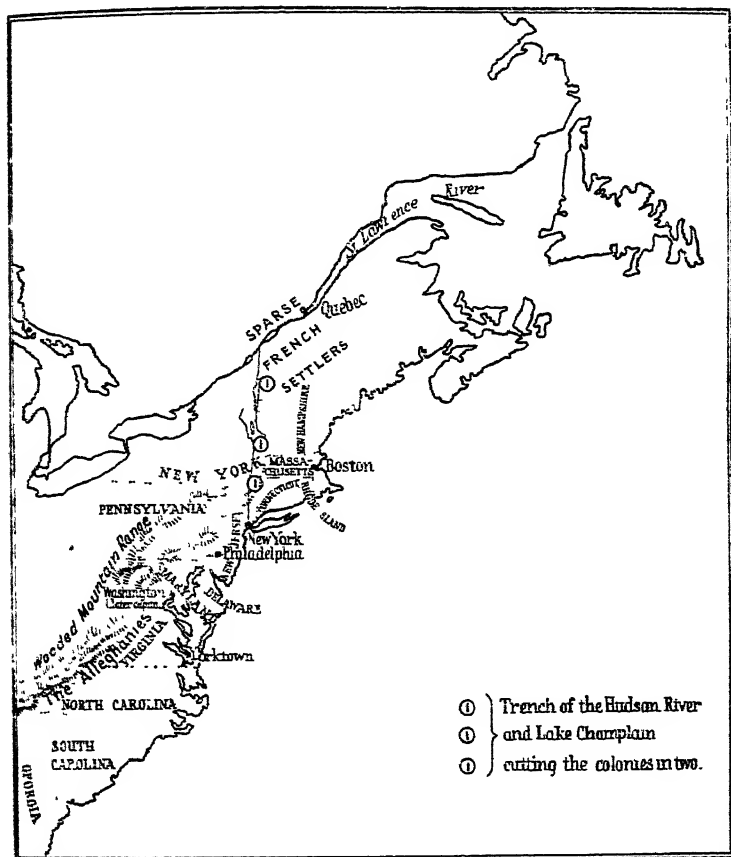
In May Howe, who had been sent to replace Gage, had 10,000 men under him at Boston. For the second time the national Congress met, set about raising an army and funds, and named as commander-in-chief George Washington, who had already taken part in the woodland warfare against the French in the past. He was a wealthy Virginian gentleman in his forty-fourth year, and well chosen for the task. On Saturday, June 17, the troops of the British commander were led for the first time against the earthworks thrown up by the colonials at Bunker's Hill, near Boston.

**The American War of Independence.** The war of independence waged by the colonials falls into four phases: the first, from Bunker's Hill onward, lasted for two years, until the spring of 1777; the second occupied but a few months, the dry months of that same year, 1777, and ends with General Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga; the third phase lasts from the autumn of 1777 to the beginning of 1781; the fourth phase, like the third, only covers the better weather of one year, 1781, and ends with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

(1) The first phase was one of fluctuating success and failure. England had a complete command of the sea and a considerable military force (largely composed of German mercenaries). Howe was driven out of Boston, but, having the sea at command, was able to sail for Halifax, where he awaited reinforcements. He centred his main effort upon New York; his brother, the admiral, brought further reinforcements, and, in spite of Washington's attack, he held Yorktown thoroughly with some 25,000 men by September 1776. Meanwhile, on July 4, the Americans had drawn up a *Declaration of Independence*, inspired by a democratic political theory which French writers had largely spread throughout our civilization; a theory which must be examined more particularly when we come to the great Revolution in France and its effects. Washington, during this year 1776, in spite of the fact that his ill-organized

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levies depended upon an uncertain and fluctuating recruitment, maintained himself in the country on the right bank of the Hudson, to the west of that river. Now, the main effort of the



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royalist force must necessarily be to come down the unique natural trench of the Great Lakes and the Hudson, which trench leads from Canada to New York. By holding this line the British would cut the rebellion in two. The seizure and holding of this line, which seemed a comparatively easy task, would, had it been maintained, have decided the war.

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(2) The second phase opens with the attempt of Burgoyne, the English general who had seen the essential character of the Hudson line, to occupy and hold it. He put his plan before the Government in England at the end of February 1777: he was to come down by the Lakes from the north, expecting a corresponding advance from the south, the British force at New York coming up the Hudson to meet him. Burgoyne, however, when he arrived from across the Atlantic, was dilatory in his advance down the line of the Lakes and the Hudson; Howe, following the accepted rule of seeking out and destroying his enemies' main force, deflected his strength southward against Washington, with the object of capturing Philadelphia. On July 23, 1777, he took away nearly two-thirds of the New York garrison by sea with this object, and he accomplished it in September, defeating Washington upon the watercourse of the Brandywine, to the west of Philadelphia, so that Washington was compelled to pass a very difficult winter with defeated forces at Valley Forge. Howe then further depleted the garrison of New York, asking for reinforcements. Burgoyne, coming down from the north, got into difficulties upon the low watershed, and was more hampered in his movements through that wild country than he had allowed for. American irregulars began to gather against him as his difficulties increased, and the expected British help from New York did not arrive. In early October Burgoyne's provisions were beginning to be exhausted; in attempting to get farther south he was beaten back, and he retired upon Saratoga. On October 12 he decided to retreat, but it was too late; the American irregulars were swarming round his mixed German and English force, now reduced to less than 5000 men; he negotiated for surrender on the 14th, and signed his capitulation on the 16th of the month.

(3) **The War becomes one between France and England.** The third phase was decisive through the intervention of France. In its unceasing duel with England the French monarchy decided that the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga was a sufficient proof that intervention was possible and would bear fruit. It was therefore decided to make war on England in support of the American rebellion. In England the gravity of the situation was at last appreciated, though the news of Burgoyne's surrender had not arrived; for already, before the French intervention, Chatham, now an aged invalid,

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had appeared in the House of Lords and made a last plea for the colonials, but still demanded the retention of English sovereignty. He also pointed out the danger of a French intervention. When the news of Burgoyne's surrender came Chatham spoke vigorously against giving way to the demand for independence, but the effort was beyond his strength—he had a fit, and a few weeks later was dead.

Until France could effectively intervene the Anglo-German forces of the royalist commanders in America were able to maintain a stalemate. They actually improved their position, upon the plan of gradually reducing the maritime belt northward and southward from New York, working entirely from the sea, which was still at their disposal. But by 1779 the French fleet was beginning to enter upon the scene.

If we look at the problem on its broadest lines the choice before England was really one between holding India and holding the American Colonies. Command of the sea could be maintained in one of the two fields, but not in both. The French had formed an alliance with the Spaniards in the hope of increasing their naval force, but no success came of it, and the first active operations of the French fleet on the American coast were beaten off. By the late spring of 1780 the English occupation of the seaboard had succeeded in holding Savannah, the chief port of Georgia, and Charlestown, the chief port of South Carolina, taking there a number of prisoners and guns. By the end of the year 1780 the English hold upon the southern states was thought so strong that the French considered a compromise whereby England should retain them on condition that the rest were abandoned. In 1781 the English position was still maintained, though with more difficulty; Cornwallis, who was in command, won an expensive action at Guilford Courthouse, but had to retreat after it to the sea-coast. As he continued to advance northward the insurgents occupied more and more of the south behind him; but the rebellion was in the last stages of financial exhaustion, and the French reinforcement was hitherto insufficient. Everything depended now upon the power of the French to act from the sea and to land reinforcement and supplies.

(4) After deceiving Clinton and his English garrison in New York into thinking that the main attack would strike *there*, Washington began to march southward against Cornwallis with

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6000 men, two-thirds of whom were French. He effected his junction with Lafayette, the French commander, on September 18, 1781, bringing his total up to 16,000 men, and sat down before Yorktown. The French fleet was in command of the water approach by Chesapeake Bay, Cornwallis, entrenched in Yorktown, awaiting relief from the sea—but none came. In the effort to dislodge the temporary superiority which the French had on the water the English admiral, Graves, had been badly handled and compelled to withdraw to New York to refit. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered.

There was no merely military reason why the surrender of Yorktown should mean the end of the war; powerful as the French were locally at sea, England was certain to recover superiority at last—but the prolongation of the struggle, the success of the colonials, and the moral effect of this last blow between them decided the affair. In the next year (1782) negotiations were begun at Paris, without serious hostilities in America; a provisional treaty was signed, and finally the second Treaty of Paris was concluded and the independence of the United States recognized, on Wednesday, September 3, 1783.

## THE ORDEAL

### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

**Nature of the Period.** From 1783, the date which closes the loss of the American colonies, to 1815 was for the new Aristocratic England the period of its ordeal.

She was to be challenged by a formidable movement sweeping the whole of civilization and known by the general term of 'the French Revolution': the effect of this vast affair upon England's own character and international position—the way in which the French Revolution, while transforming the world and making a new Europe, indirectly produced an England more separated from Europe than she had been and at the same time expanding during and after the struggle in wealth, position, and dominion—must be followed. England had become newly great as an aristocratic Protestant state. Democracy was (and remains) abhorrent to her political temper, and the idea of social equality is profoundly alien to her character. Was she to suffer trans-

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formation and perhaps decline through this power of new egalitarian enthusiasm sweeping over Europe from a hostile people of Catholic culture? That was the issue; and the main business was a test whether a society formed on upper-class government and direction by the wealthy should survive, or perish at the hands of an all-embracing movement for human equality. In this ordeal England triumphed, so that the succeeding hundred years, the nineteenth century, was one everywhere influenced by English example and invention. On account of England's successful passage through this ordeal at the end of the eighteenth century the nineteenth may be called the 'English Century': an epoch half made and wholly coloured by England.

The struggle of England with the French Revolution falls into three parts:

(1) The approaches, from 1783 to 1793, when England finds herself involved in the great general Revolutionary war.

(2) The first phase of the English war, 1793 to 1802. By 1802, at the Peace of Amiens, England had maintained its contact outside the growing French supremacy abroad, and repelled for the moment, from herself alone, the moral influence of the Revolution.

(3) The second phase of the war, 1803 to 1815. This was the struggle with Napoleon, who, having made himself head of the French state, Emperor of the French, and conquering leader of the Revolution, spreads its effect throughout Europe, but loses his personal power through the invasion of Russia, is defeated by the European monarchs, exiled, and after a brief return finally crushed at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. England emerges the richest and the only unexhausted Power in an exhausted Europe, securely possessed of the sea-routes for her commerce, and of a maritime supremacy which enables her to acquire by treaty and to found by emigration a new colonial empire. She holds henceforward a supremacy which lasts for the long lifetime of a man.

**The Illusion of England's Decadence through the Loss of the American War.** The loss of the American Colonies was felt largely in England and almost universally among her rivals and former allies to mark her decline. The judgment was to prove, like most judgments of contemporary events, erroneous. It had, however, one immediate effect, which was the beginning of a resurrection of Irish nationality.

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The full character of this considerable new feature in English affairs is better described in connection with the events of the next century, when the Irish movement, after having suffered a final setback through the Act of Union with England (1801), re-emerged and played a greater and greater part, especially towards the end of the nineteenth century. For the moment it took the form of a virtually independent legislature for Ireland, passing in history under the general name of Grattan's Parliament.

This Irish Parliament was wholly Protestant, not only in its membership, but in the voters who in theory returned those members; yet it stood for a new national feeling in Ireland, and it was characteristic of the depression through which England was passing after the shock of the American war that the successful Irish claim to a completely independent Parliament was backed by an organized Irish armed force. The Ulster Volunteers, as Protestant in personnel as the Parliament was, demanded commercial independence, and were able to enforce their demands, which England granted. As a consequence there was opened a period of unexampled prosperity for Ireland, lasting for fifteen years, during which the population increased at least as rapidly as that of England, remaining to the English in the proportion of quite one to three. Ireland has an active shipping; her capital of Dublin grows greater, and becomes a true national centre with a fine public architecture which still testifies to the spirit of the time. But all this was jealously watched by the ruling class in England, whose spokesman was now the young second son of the great Chatham, William Pitt.

William Pitt in this same year 1783 becomes Prime Minister through the favour of the King. He is but one of many of his class who continue, as they have in the past, to rule all English affairs, but he is a man of eloquent address and considerable abilities (though these have been exaggerated), and above all continues tenacious in the strongly nationalist tradition inherited from his father. All his energies are directed to the recovery and extension of England and English power. William Pitt was only in his twenty-fourth year when he was thus put at the head of affairs; but for more than twenty years, until his somewhat early death from drink (the vice of the gentry at that time) he was the symbol and representative of England and, with short intervals, the chief of her executive. He mainly acts as spokes-

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man for the financial powers of the City, but his initiative is considerable and his personality impresses itself upon the whole period.

**The Resources of England.** The impression, prevalent almost as much at home as abroad, that England's decline had begun with the loss of the American Colonies was belied by the presence at the time of many new sources of energy. The French discovered that an attempt to reassert themselves in Asiatic seas could not be maintained, in spite of the exploits of their admiral, Suffren, and in the upshot it was clearer than ever that India was to be an English preserve.

The chief political figure in India, Warren Hastings, was impeached for excesses of which he was accused in the process of expanding the direct power of the East India Company over native rulers and the area which it controlled, but the trial—which made a great noise at the time—was in reality only another proof of the wholly free hand England now had for acquiring full control over the sub-continent; a control which increased uninterruptedly until the middle of the following century, and then after a brief period of anxiety at the Mutiny grew stronger still, until it became unquestioned and universal throughout India in the second half of that century.

But apart from the now certain conquest of India, which formed a main factor in the increasing wealth of the country, there were three sources of new energy apparent: one in religion, another in agriculture, and a third in the novel use of machinery. The last two, like India, were rapidly increasing sources of financial power and population. It was this financial power which was to carry England victoriously through the coming struggle, and to contrast most vividly with the corresponding financial exhaustion of the French—the permanent rivals of England.

All these three new sources of energy and strength were the fruit of things which had begun when the men who were middle-aged and elderly in the decade 1783-93 were young.

(1) *Religion.* An intense revival of enthusiastic Protestant religion had appeared, which will always be connected with the outstanding name of John Wesley: though he himself would have been shocked to hear the suggestion, it was in truth a reawakening of those essentials of Protestantism which were originally inspired by John Calvin in the first years of the

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Reformation, nearly three centuries before. Before Wesley Whitefield had set the example, but it was Wesley's extraordinary industry and his power of organization and of influencing and controlling other men which were the prime factors. Through all the later part of a long life (1703-91) he preached to great multitudes, especially of the poor. A clergyman of the Church of England, he never consented to separate himself from that body, though he had to depend upon laymen for ministers and was treated by his own communion with hostility. It was in spite of him that the movement became a dissenting one, known, from an earlier title, as Methodist. It had a very great effect, not only in producing this special body, which had 100,000 adult communicants before Wesley's death—a proportion answering to, say, half a million of the present population—but even more a leavening effect throughout the body of Protestantism in England, producing in it that evangelical movement which remained its chief characteristic for three generations.

(2) *Agriculture*. English agriculture was also taking on a new and superior character. Better methods, new crops, and a new rotation thereof, the taking up of waste land, the enclosure of the commons—all these increased the nation's resources in food and supplied the rapidly increasing population. Here also the beginnings had come long before, but the fruit of those beginnings was only now largely apparent.

(3) *Machinery*. Lastly, the use of machinery, which has been the chief external mark of civilization since that time, was of English origin; and with it the use of coal. Improved machinery for the production of wealth in manufacture had appeared with the new spinning jenny a few years after George III's accession, and at much the same time James Watt took out his patents (1769) which first rendered steam, the value of which as a source of power had long been understood, not in England alone, to be of extensive practical use. The steam-engine rapidly developed the industrial revolution already in progress, and placed manufacture, especially spinning and weaving (which had formerly been dependent upon water-power), upon the coalfields. Meanwhile the use of coal for smelting iron (in place of the old expensive and limited production with charcoal) already known for a century and in use in the previous generation, was more and more widely extended. With all this went, of course, the growth of a new urban population: England gradually ceased to be

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mainly agricultural; the great towns began to grow. This again was based upon earlier things; Liverpool had already multiplied by ten between the beginning of the century and the accession of George III, Manchester by five, Birmingham by seven, and Sheffield by nearly eight. The characteristic of modern England, the great industrial town, was thoroughly launched.

**The Proletariat.** There might seem at first sight to be no connecting link between these various forms of the new forces of England, save a general spirit of expansion and energy: but there was, binding them all, one connecting factor, which has come to be the chief social feature of this country—the mass of Englishmen were more and more dispossessed. They were more and more becoming what is called a proletariat—that is, lacking the means of production and depending primarily upon a wage provided for them by the minority who were the owners of capital and land.

This, the most profound element of all, had started centuries before, when the landed proprietors, through their two great committees, the House of Lords and the House of Commons, through the lawyers, who were of their own class and appointed to public office by them through their superior economic power of purchase, and also through their action as local legislators and magistrates, had begun dispossessing the peasantry. The English proletariat (a class of men destitute of property) was already formed—though only slowly becoming the majority of the country—before the age of machinery and capitalism had arrived. Without a proletariat already present the age of industrial capitalism could never have arrived. It arose from the concentration of wealth in few hands, the direction of production by individuals controlling great numbers of dependent poor, the mastery of a minority who supplied the knowledge and judgment, the concentration of capital, and all the rest which well-divided property does not supply.

It was in the proletarian masses that the religious movement worked, and without such material to work on it would have been of far less effect. It was from the more successful among the proletarians, and the smaller masters controlling them, that the new middle classes arose who were, in the nineteenth century, to be the soul of the new intensity of Protestantism which Wesley had revived.

The gradual but remarkable expansion of agriculture was on

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the same lines of capitalism; the mark and test of it was the enclosure of the commons, which more than anything else deprived the poor of an economic basis and turned them into wholly dependent wage-earners. In the fifty years before the accession of George III 300,000 acres had been enclosed; in the next lifetime *seven million*—one-third of the useful land—was taken from the people and went to swell the new capitalist power. The function of the proletariat in the new mechanical production is obvious; for upon the presence of a dispossessed class working at a wage rendered as low as possible by competition depended the possibility of new mechanical production for export—the profits of which depended upon the difference between the value of the goods turned out and the ‘labour costs’ of those who did the actual work, but whom the new social organization forbade to possess, enjoy, or sell the products of their own labour. The goods manufactured in this new fashion and the surplus food from the fields went to the masters.

**The New French Philosophy.** Prior to and dominating every material movement in history is something spiritual. The mind controls its environment, not environment the mind. A movement the distant roots of which were to be found in the French Huguenot and Protestant rebellion against the traditional culture of the nation developed in France during the eighteenth century, and, exercising the power of the Word, began to permeate the whole of our civilization. It was a reaction against tradition, and especially against the tradition of revealed religion. Its chief exponent was Arouet, who wrote under the pseudonym of Voltaire. He did not create, but he led; and by his literary genius, and especially his wit, gave form and edge to the intellectual change. It had not, even so late in the eighteenth century as 1760–70, affected the popular masses in France (let alone elsewhere), but it had had a conquering effect among the leaders of thought and the educated classes in general. In the nations of Catholic culture—notably in France, but also in Italy, less in Spain, hardly at all in Ireland—it had hard material to bite upon in the shape of the organized and official Church. In the Protestant culture it had less effect because there was less definable material to attack, but it profoundly affected the leading minds of the time even there; there was close friendship and sympathy between Voltaire and Frederick the Great of Prussia; the best intellects of England at the time felt it also;

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but France was the centre from which it radiated. One may say that by 1780 the French upper classes as a whole, including the middle class and the liberal professions, were living mainly under its influence. Nearly all the first-rate people who were then growing up to manhood fell under its spell.

Now, there went with this attack on tradition in its highest form—the organization of revealed religion; in other words, the body of Christian doctrine—an affiliated attack upon traditional organization of every kind, including the tradition of kingship and the hierarchy of the social classes: a demand for EQUALITY.

There was no logical connection between the attack on revealed religion and the demand for social and political equality, but there came a practical alliance between them and so close an intermixture that they appeared indistinguishable. There was nothing novel either in scepticism or in the conception of human equality—they are as old as the human race and native to man: what was novel was the eloquence and lucidity and energy with which they were now expressed in subversion of an established but decaying order of society, and the man who used the power of the Word in the mightiest fashion in this branch of the movement—the demand for equality—was Jean Jacques Rousseau, a French-speaking Swiss.

With this demand for human equality went another thing which in reason is quite distinct from it—a demand for *democratic government*; that is, for the making of laws, and the administration of them, by the community to whom those laws will apply. This again is an idea as old as the world, but it was reasserted with vigour by the new French philosophy, with its conquering weapon of literary excellence. It may be compared in the rapid work it did to that other literary miracle, the Authorized Version of the Bible, the influence of which over the English people is similarly based upon the Word. Rousseau was not a creator, nor even a leader, but he could formulate and present what was already in men's minds. His action began to be felt after the middle of the century. He published his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* as early as 1753, but the masterpiece which became the soul and flame of the effort at democratic government was his famous booklet (it is as short as a Gospel) *The Social Contract*, which appeared, with its explosive effect, in the year 1762. Its ideas and diction became the

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commonplaces of the new enthusiastic movement everywhere, and are at the base of the American Declaration of Independence.

It should be remembered that even Rousseau, a man of more eloquence than judgment, saw what should be manifest to every one—the difficulty or impossibility of democratic government in large masses of men; he says himself at the opening of his famous pamphlet that democracy (an idea quite distinct from equality, for nowhere is equality stronger than under a despotism) is not to be expected of human nature. But in the demand for justice and human dignity those impediments were forgotten; the idea that democracy should be practised by great bodies of men, destroying the power of the rich as well as the traditional powers of the aristocracy or the king, spread like fire, at least among all those who read and discussed. The establishment of the United States, with small free communities actually democratic in the North, and slave-owning free aristocracies in the South, who met to arrange freely their common government, was a powerful influence in spreading the enthusiasm.

**The French Political Movement begins.** The enthusiasm for equality and for the quite separate idea of democracy spread among the leaders of French thought, and from them to the mass of the educated classes and even to the bulk of the town populations; and it was of the more effect because France not only spoke to all Europe by her language (the common medium of the upper classes throughout Western Continental civilization, and, for that matter, of Russia also), but she was also the largest organized state. She had much more than double the population of Britain, perhaps double the population of Spain; and of the various German states the largest single unit had not half the French numbers. It is doubtful even if all those who spoke German at the time were as numerous combined as the French people; they were certainly not much more numerous.

But, though the powder was there ready for the explosion, what put a match to it was not philosophy, nor the power of the Word, but finance. We have seen why the French national finances were always inferior in elasticity as well as in proportionate amount of revenue to those of England: a large and even increasing owning peasantry was the handicap, as was also the disinclination peasants have for control by a banking system. To this was added the decay of the French monarchy, whose administrative institutions, including those for assessing and

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levying the taxes, had grown anomalous and were falling out of gear. The liberation of the American Colonies had imposed a very heavy burden of debt upon France and England, but the smaller community, England, easily extricated itself, and even in these very years following the loss of the colonies there was a surplus of over one million, and Pitt was able to establish his sinking fund.

In France the financial problems seemed insoluble. After experiments lasting over two years, including (as in the case of Charles I of England) the calling of a council of notables, it was proposed to summon the States-General, a body which was only convened at very rare intervals and had not, as a fact, met since 1614. This body, which was a union of three orders, clergy, nobles, and commons, under the King, in the old Parliamentary tradition of the Middle Ages, would be qualified to vote a special grant in the name of the whole nation. There was no national Parliament in France as in England. The medieval system of sending delegates to vote exceptional grants over and above the regular revenue in times of crisis was worked in the provinces individually; just as in the seventeenth century there had been in England a Scottish Parliament and an English Parliament and an Irish Parliament, all working side by side under one Crown, so in France were the provincial bodies. But the gathering of representatives from the whole territory could only be a very exceptional thing.

When such a gathering took place under this name of the States-General it was not, after the English aristocratic model, a mere body of rich landed proprietors with a few lawyers and merchants added, for whom small numbers of freeholders and burgesses voted, but a universal concentration of the nation. Thousands of small units had the right to send up each its complaints and demands in writing, and therefore when the assembly met at Versailles in the spring of 1789 it did not meet for the finding of financial resources, but for the expression of widespread feeling upon the whole state of society.

On this account the States-General at Versailles rapidly turned into a National Assembly, expressing the new enthusiasms of the time for equality, for reform and simplification of the legal system, for the destruction of privileges, for the affirmation of national sovereignty.

**The Revolution begins.** It is debatable whether the

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French executive could have stood up against the intense and growing feeling among so large a proportion of its subjects by the use of armed force. It is more probable that the attempt would have led to a premature civil war. When it was half-heartedly made the Paris populace began to rise (it would not have done so without organization, and it is again debatable how far the movement was spontaneous and how far engineered). On July 14, 1789, the Bastille in Paris, which corresponded to the Tower of London and was a place of imprisonment for those few—usually of the wealthy classes—whom the monarchy desired to restrain in some exceptional way, was stormed by the mob. Later the demand that the national King should be brought from his palace at Versailles to the capital itself was enforced by the same means, and the National Assembly, as the representative body, with a very few nobles and still fewer clergy, called itself, and proceeded to a great mass of new legislation and reform of every kind, including curtailing of the powers of the Crown. Disorders throughout the country, attacks on the privileged classes, and threats directed against the monarch moved the established Governments of Europe outside France to react against the revolution in progress. But they were late in taking any combined steps, for even if they all acted together the opposing national force of the French was formidable, and their separate ambitions prevented their coalition. Frederick of Prussia, for instance, was intent upon the forcible seizure of Polish territory. He had already seized the Pomorze—that is, the district by which Poland had had access to the sea for centuries between Dantzic and Prussian Pomerania.<sup>1</sup> He desired to seize much more, and was ready, when he could get the Russian Government and the reluctant Austrian Government to abet him, to partition the whole of Poland—that is, to murder the country and subjugate its people.

From the disorder largely directed against their class in France the nobles fled, chiefly to Germany. They were known as the *émigrés*, and the active sympathies of their class throughout Europe began to threaten war against the French people. At the same time the attempt of the Revolution to subjugate

<sup>1</sup> This territory of Polish culture seized by Frederick II is called in Prussia to-day the 'Polish Corridor.' The term has been widely adopted, though the implication that it is an artificial passage cut through German land is the opposite of the truth.

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the Church to the state and to impose a civil organization upon the clergy led to a violent persecution of religion and the consequent emigration of many priests.

The French Queen, Marie Antoinette, the daughter of Maria Theresa, was—with many others—active in an effort to save the monarchy by force. She arranged for the flight of the royal family (in the midsummer of 1791) to the frontier, where was gathered the national army, still in theory controlled by the King. But the flight of the royal family was intercepted; they were brought back to Paris, where they suffered further indignities, for the King, and still more his wife, were regarded now as the allies of the foreign forces which desired to invade France and crush the Revolution. Late in 1791 a second French National Assembly, newly elected under the Constitution which the first had framed, proposed to meet the growing menace by demanding explanations from Austria; receiving no satisfaction, they declared war on that Power in April 1792.

Louis XVI, the King of France, even at this late hour was advised to attempt the recovery of personal rule, when all power had really left him. He discharged his Ministry that summer, and the Duke of Brunswick, who stood on the frontiers with an armed force, wherein was a considerable contingent of emigrant French nobles, was urged by the Queen, Marie Antoinette, to issue an injudicious threat. Brunswick thereupon published a manifesto saying that if any insult were offered to the French royal family fearful vengeance would be taken upon the French people and the town of Paris would be destroyed. This was in July 1792. The answer of the Revolution was an attack on the Palace of the Tuileries, where the King and the royal family were, and their imprisonment. The hostile army crossed the frontier, massacres of those who had been imprisoned in Paris under the suspicion of aiding the enemy followed, and on September 21 the third Parliament of the Revolution, called the National Convention, declared the monarchy at an end and France became a republic. The invasion of France was checked, the enemy thrown back, and a counter-invasion of the Austrian Netherlands began. Further, the Revolutionaries issued an Edict of Fraternity to all oppressed peoples, and started on a crusade for the spread of democratic principles.

**The English Intervention.** So far England had kept aloof. The Revolution was instinctively regarded with hostility,

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not only by the governing class, which had ruled England now uninterruptedly from the death of Charles I, but by the mass of the people. Its principles and philosophy were received with varying degrees of acceptance by a small minority among the highly educated middle classes and some few of their social superiors, but although among the mass of the poor, and especially in the towns, there was grave discontent and a vague idea that a popular movement abroad might do something to alleviate their misery, the national spirit prevailed. The passion for England—a thing, not a theory, and a thing which all tradition had now bound up in the public mind with government under the gentry and with a whole spirit opposed to the new French philosophy—roused in the nation an increasing antagonism to the Revolution. The dislike of France in nearly all, the hatred in many, was an hereditary thing. The disorders and atrocities which had accompanied the Revolution increased this feeling. It had become fierce after the Revolutionaries had put up for his trial, condemned, and executed King Louis XVI, in January 1793.

It was then manifest to the governing class, as to the masses whom they governed, that England and the French Revolution were mortal opponents. All that England had meant, consciously to the rich few and unconsciously to the many, would be menaced if the Revolution were to triumph in arms on the Continent.

Nevertheless Pitt would not interfere. He had a good legal case for declaring war, in that the Revolutionaries in possession of Belgium (which they had overrun) had broken the old treaty which closed the Scheldt and killed the commerce of Antwerp. The French Revolution had proclaimed the Scheldt open to trade; but Pitt did not take advantage of the opportunity to declare war because it seemed certain that the French effort would sooner or later fail upon the Continent. The forces gathering against it seemed overwhelming, and their combination was growing; the traditional English policy was to wait until some Continental ally would do the military work required, the fruits of which England should reap upon the sea. But that policy was now doubtful. If the French proved too successful it might be necessary for England to act as she had acted before, when she had got the Prussian alliance by the Treaty of Westminster in 1756. The French Revolutionary Government, noting that England was herself arming and urging the naval

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power of Spain to join the coalition against them, took the initiative on February 1, 1793, and declared war on England: a solution which had been expected and was welcomed by the Government of this country.

**The First Phase of the War between England and the Revolution. The Nature of the Conflict.** The first phase of the English Revolutionary War—1793–1802—comprises two distinct elements, the sea-fighting and Ireland. Of English land-fighting, after the preliminary blunders and disasters, save the mopping up of the doomed French fragment in Egypt and a small abortive effort on the French coast, there was none; while the other elements of the nine years were not comparable, in their importance to the future of England, with the Irish rebellion, its suppression, and the Act of Union. But it is true that the chief financial event of the time, the experiment of paper money, merits a mention. And it falls naturally under a consideration of the war rather than as a domestic event.

For the second weapon of England after her fleet was the subsidies she was able to provide for her Continental allies. These were poured out continuously and unceasingly during the whole twenty-two years of the conflict, and not only supported states which were willing to attack the French, but were sufficient to persuade those who were doubtful.

**Opening of the War. "The Glorious First of June."** England began by lending a body of troops to the general coalition against the French. These troops were to act in the north-eastern theatre of the war, the Netherlands, in connection with the recovery from the French, if possible, of that coast of the Low Countries which has always so closely concerned England. They were put under the command of the Duke of York, a son of King George III. The young man was not without military abilities, and his chief misfortune, the defeat of the British army at Tourcoing, was more the fault of his allies than himself, though it is true that the main plan, of which he was the author, was hazardous. The first effort was made against Dunkirk, and it failed in the battle of Hondschoote on the sand-dunes of the sea-coast to the east of the town. It was an action remarkable in the annals of warfare because the victorious French general was put to death by the Revolutionary Government for having won a victory. The complaint against him was that it might have been pushed farther than it was.

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The next considerable action was that of Tourcoing. The French forces were lying in the neighbourhood of Lille and to the east of that town, round what was then the small market-town of Tourcoing. The Duke of York formed a plan whereby the various forces should converge upon the place from the north and west, while he himself should advance from the south. With exact synchrony the heads of the columns ought all to have appeared from three sides at once and in total numbers far superior to the enemy, thus catching him in a trap, surrounded. But there was a complete lack of synchrony. The Duke of York's own command, coming up from the south, was the only one which kept to the time-table; and when it arrived on the field it found itself unsupported. It was therefore driven out of Tourcoing, though with no very great loss, and the discipline and conduct of the Guards in this retreat were remarkable; but the pursuit was hard pressed, and the Duke of York himself barely escaped at the gallop upon his horse.

Far more important to England than these abortive land actions was the work of the fleet by sea. To understand this we must know that the whole royal French navy, already somewhat inferior to the full naval power of Great Britain before the Revolution, had been morally ruined by that political event. The two things essential to it as a fighting force were its body of officers and its highly trained gunners, who formed a special corps. Both disappeared early in the Revolutionary turmoil; the officers, for the most part drawn from the poorer Breton nobility, accustomed to the sea, were dispersed; and the trained body of gunners fell to pieces. The French fleet henceforward would inevitably fall a prey to the English whenever there was anything like equality of units or weight of material, or even when the English were somewhat inferior in these.

This was proved in the second summer of the war, 1794. Howe, in command of a fleet crossing the Atlantic upon the track leading from America to the harbour of Brest, was looking out for a convoy bringing wheat which had been bought for the French forces. In this object he failed, for he did not intercept the convoy, and the wheat was landed; but incidentally he brought to action the main French fleet in those waters. In number of ships he was inferior to the enemy, and still more inferior in weight of metal, but the French were in such a condition of chaos that their supreme command was in the hands of

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a man who had been no more than a petty officer twelve months before, and the greater part of their guns were handled by half-trained men. The action was engaged on Sunday, June 1, in half a gale of wind, and ended in a striking victory for England. One of the French ships was sunk, six were captured, and the force as a whole was crippled. This was the action known in English history as "the Glorious First of June." Meanwhile Bastia, the capital and chief port of Corsica, had been occupied, and the arsenal at Toulon badly burned, before the French had succeeded in driving the English and Spanish ships out of the harbour, which they had occupied during the insurrection of the town against the Revolution.

The maritime Powers which came next after France and England—namely, Spain and Holland—soon joined the French side; the first, Spain, because it was clear that English supremacy at sea would leave no results for her, and the second, Holland, because she was occupied by French troops, and a great part of her population, perhaps half, sympathized with the Revolution at least as against England—a rival in Asiatic colonial effort, in commerce, and in the carrying trade.

An insurrection being in progress against the Revolution in the maritime province of Vendée, on the Bay of Biscay, and supported by Brittany, an abortive effort was made to land a small force of emigrant French Royalists on the peninsula of Quiberon, in June 1795. Money was supplied by England, and stores also, and the troops were convoyed by English ships. But the whole thing was mismanaged and broke down; some nine hundred only got away, seven hundred who were captured were shot as traitors by the French, and the disaster added one more to the list of unsuccessful efforts against islands and peninsulas, which are the natural land objectives of a maritime Power at war.

In 1796, the year of the young Bonaparte's famous campaign in Italy, the first continuous successes of the French armies against the monarchies threatening the Revolution took place. It was not only the rapidity and completeness of Bonaparte's success, but its quality which impressed all opinion, including that of the wisest observers in England. It seemed evident not only that the Revolution would not be crushed, but that the military temper now aroused in the French, much the largest and best organized of the Continental states, might, if war continued, press forward and spread the new doctrines throughout Europe

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—the one thing which it was imperative for England and for Pitt to prevent.

Austria, defeated in Italy, signed a peace at Campo Formio on October 17, 1797; Pitt had already considered the possibility of making peace. The war, which at its opening had been very popular in England, now appeared to be the cause of the increasing suffering; commerce was interrupted, the price of food was rising, and the hopes of an easy and short triumph, always strong at the beginning of a war, had been disappointed. The funds were nearly 50 per cent. below par; a loan of eighteen millions had to be raised, and, though efforts at landing a French force in Ireland broke down, the subsidies poured out on the Continent were not bearing fruit. Taxation was high beyond experience; within four years eighty millions had been added to the National Debt; George II's own territories of Hanover, on the Continent, had had to make peace, and Prussia had done the same.

**Paper Money.** In the midst of the crisis English currency broke down. The threat of invasion had caused a run on the country banks, and these had in turn called in their deposits with the Bank of England. At a moment when there was barely a million left in that institution, and when the next two days might exhaust that margin, paper notes, accepted at a meeting of the City, replaced coin. It was the first great example of that expedient in our history,<sup>1</sup> and for some years it went perfectly, the paper money standing at par. This year of crisis, 1797, also saw the two mutinies of the fleet: first that at Spithead in April; next that at the Nore, in the mouth of the Thames, in May; but these did not argue any real weakness in the fleet, the proof being the naval victories of Cape St Vincent, fought and won against the Spaniards just before these mutinies, and another over the Dutch at Camperdown in the following October.

**The French Expedition to Egypt: the Nile and Malta.** In 1798 and the two succeeding years the spirits of the people were raised and the opportunity of further resistance afforded by the strange determination of the French Revolutionary Government to send a comparatively small expedition to Egypt

<sup>1</sup> Notes—i.e., promises to pay by the Bank of England guaranteed by the state—had long existed; but they always could be, and were, redeemed in gold. *Now, for the first time*, they acted alone. Paper was forced on as currency alone, and treated as though it were real money.

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under General Bonaparte, now by far the most famous, as he was already known to be incomparably the ablest, of the Revolutionary commanders—a young man of thirty. In doing this the Revolution was risking its last fully organized fleet; it was detaching its best commander and some of its men across the sea, which was now virtually commanded by the enemy, and to an immense distance from the scene of action in Western Europe. The anomaly has never been fully explained: it is probably best accounted for by a convergence of two things which had nothing to do with a military plan or the expectation of victory. One of these two things would seem to be the dread in which the politicians at home stood of keeping a highly popular young general and an army which was becoming veteran at their doors; while the other element was Bonaparte's own ambition to have a comparatively independent command at a distance, where he might add to his glory, no matter in how sterile a fashion. After the French had landed in Egypt, won the battle of the Pyramids, and successfully occupied the country, their communications were destroyed.

Though the British fleet had not been able to intercept the expedition, Nelson (whose supreme talents in naval command were now recognized) had only to discover where the French fleet lay and it would be at his mercy. He found it lying close in-shore, just east of Alexandria, on August 2, 1798, and there destroyed it. In the next year Napoleon marched his victorious army to Acre, upon the Syrian coast, but it was doomed, for the sea was held against it. Napoleon himself then abandoned his army, leaving it to Kléber, and returned to France, escaping capture as by a miracle. And in November 1799 he made himself head of the state under the title of First Consul. Meanwhile the French expeditionary force in Egypt, now heavily depleted in numbers, was at the mercy of an attack from overseas by the Power commanding that element. The English landed an army at Alexandria, and soon the surrender of the French general, Menou, who was now in command (Kléber having been assassinated by a Mohammedan) was made to them.

Pitt with his subsidies had formed a second European coalition against the French while Napoleon was away in Egypt, and it promised a better success than the first. The Plain of Lombardy, out of which Napoleon had chased the Austrians, was recovered. The Russians under Suwaroff gained a decisive

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victory at Novi, and the French were also beaten back in the centre of their line. The Dutch fleet, which had been at the service of the French, was captured in the August of that same year. The French rallied somewhat, but this recoil of their power was what served Napoleon's opportunity when he landed and enabled him to become the head of the state.

In the year 1800 came two decisive events, the first of which was the more important. This was the victory by the First Consul won over the Austrians at Marengo, the result of which was the recovery of the greater part of North Italy by the French. The second was the winning by Moreau of the battle of Hohenlinden, a crushing defeat of the Austrians on the very road to Vienna. On February 9 the Treaty of Lunéville was signed, which gave to the French, now definitely victors and regarding Napoleon as their saviour (with an insufficient recognition of the importance of Hohenlinden), the frontier of the Rhine and their supremacy in North Italy.

Shortly afterwards there was committed what later proved to be a blunder, an attack by the British fleet upon a neutral Power without declaration of war. Its object was to prevent the Danish naval stores and ships from falling into French hands, should there later be a Danish alliance with Napoleon; but this sudden attack upon a neutral during peace was never forgotten. It was felt by all Europe to be an outrage, and the memory of it was later a main cause of Russia's entering into that alliance with the French which came so near to making Napoleon the master of Europe. Nelson, second in command at this victory, further raised his naval reputation through having succeeded after refusing to obey the orders of his superior, Sir Hyde Parker.

**The Peace of Amiens.** The strain upon England, in spite of her now unquestioned supremacy at sea, had become very great; wheat had risen to a price never known before. There had been riots; and though the beginning of a new threat of invasion from France had not yet grown serious, it had disturbed public opinion. On the question of peace England was much divided; the populace undoubtedly wanted it, but they had no tradition or experience of influencing Government and did not think of attempting it. The money power was divided in opinion, as was the gentry. Napoleon, the First Consul, desired nothing better than peace: the foundations of success of that new Europe which had been the object of the

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Revolutionary crusade, of which he was now the great leader, seemed securely laid; England's sea-power he had found to be an obstacle he could not overcome, and he on his side was willing to treat. The preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens were signed therefore on October 1, 1801. England was to restore the temporary conquests which her command of the sea during the past few years had given her, save for Trinidad and the very important exception of Ceylon, where English power had replaced the Dutch. On the other hand, the Cape of Good Hope was to go back to the Dutch, and, what was the pivot of the whole affair, Malta, which had been occupied by the English after their establishment of naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, was to be restored to its traditional owners, the Knights of St John.

The Peace was regarded as lasting by most contemporaries, especially upon the Continent; but the body of opposition to it in England remained strong. In Parliament there were large majorities in favour of peace, and Pitt himself certainly desired it for the moment; but his colleagues were more doubtful, and Grenville, Windham, Spencer, and others, many of the leading names of the country, were in direct opposition to the policy.

The preliminaries of peace having thus been accepted, the instrument was signed, under the title of the Peace of Amiens, on March 27, 1802.

**The Irish Rebellion and Union.** Before proceeding to the last and most critical phase of the struggle between the English aristocratic state and the new Europe created by the Revolution, it is necessary to emphasize the experimental union with Ireland which was in part the consequence of the struggle, and was to affect the history of England so profoundly throughout the coming century.

The Irish Parliament had acquired its status of an independent national Parliament under a common Crown, not subject to interference from the English Parliament, by the threat of force; and that threat had come at a moment when English fortunes appeared to be at their lowest. It was certain therefore that if England were to recover her strength she would attempt to undo that work; for, although the existing Irish Parliament was already Protestant and the armed forces behind it were Protestant too, yet an independent Ireland, even though its Government

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were strictly confined to the small Protestant minority (which possessed nine-tenths of the land), had been ever since the Tudors—that is, for three centuries—the chief dread of every English Government.

The French Revolution, and the moral duel between it and aristocratic England, powerfully increased the tendency to destroy such measure of independence as Ireland had achieved. It was through Ireland that French armies might strike at England, and from Irish harbours that a French fleet might be supported. And the desire to eliminate an independent Irish Parliament was the stronger because that Parliament was in danger of being reformed from within, and becoming at last truly national. Such a reform, largely influenced by the spirit set free in the French Revolution, would have extended the suffrage and the right to enter professions to the mass of the nation, now excluded on the score of religion.

A new Irish Parliament elected in the year 1790 contained many young men eager for these reforms; Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the brother of the Duke of Leinster, and Robert Stewart, later to be known as Lord Castlereagh, were members of this group, while a silent young member expressing no opinions was Arthur Wellesley, later to be the Duke of Wellington. The French Revolutionary movement had caused by its example the formation of strong organizing political bodies in Ireland, called 'Committees.' They gave themselves special names. That which spoke for the Catholic majority of the nation was soon divided between the wealthier Catholics, who feared the democratic movement, and the masses. In 1793, the year in which the war with France had broken out, the Irish Parliament brought in a Bill which should enfranchise a considerable part of the Catholic majority, though not allowing Catholics to sit in Parliament. Pitt saw the danger, rightly judging that the beginnings of democratic reform in a people of such temper as the Irish would rapidly lead to a complete popular demand. It was perhaps on Pitt's own initiative—if so, it speaks highly for his intelligence—that a plan was formed for destroying Irish independence. This plan was on the following lines: (1) some measure of Catholic enfranchisement, which should associate the coming measure of union with that religious equality which the mass of the Irish people desired; (2) the Irish Parliament to put an end to itself by buying up its members, who were

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already thoroughly used to an old-established system under which most of the seats were held as the property of the wealthy Protestant landlords.

But meanwhile the Irish nationalist effort to obtain French aid against the coming destruction of independent Irish government was leading to the use of force. The English Government organized a spy system, the first great organ of the kind since Cecil's, and one which from that day onward has increased until it is now a recognized part of modern government. Through this Pitt obtained his first victims, whose fate would, it was hoped, serve to crush the new movement by terror.

A body known as the United Irishmen, combining the Protestant democrats of Belfast and the democratic Catholic movement, led by Wolfe Tone, a Protestant member, was actively preparing to call in foreign aid in 1794. In 1795 came a further step towards the approaching crisis. The Irish Catholic bishops had already pointed out that the French Revolution had stopped the chances of educating their clergy abroad, and desired the right to train them in Ireland; the result was the foundation by the English Government of Maynooth; and meanwhile everything was being done by the same Government to exasperate religious feeling as much as possible, with the object of having active Protestant support when or if rebellion should come. One more effort was made for Catholic Emancipation through the Irish Parliament, but Pitt's bribery made that impossible; it got but one-quarter of the votes.

In 1797 the Irish revolutionary movement had separated itself from the attempt to work through Parliament, and the proposal for the support of the Irish by the French under Hoche had appeared. Pitt let loose upon the unarmed Catholic peasantry militia and yeomanry recruited from the most fanatical of the Protestants, and every form of cruelty and outrage turned the island into a hell. It is from that moment that the permanent estrangement of the Irish from England may be dated.

The French expedition set out in December 1796, but it never landed, being dispersed by storms; and in 1798 came the explosion, in the shape of a partial, sporadic, and ill-organized rebellion. The Irish were almost without firearms, untrained, and at the mercy of the trained cavalry. Even had the movement been universal it was doomed. But it was not universal, and its leaders were apprehended before any serious danger had arisen.

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A rising having been fixed for May 23, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had been betrayed by one of the spies, was arrested on the 19th. Slight successes against isolated bodies of troops were repaid by the massacre of prisoners in the act of surrender: the first shot had been fired on a Thursday morning, by the Saturday evening the Government knew that it was secure.

This failure was followed by an abortive partial rising led by a priest, John Murphy, whose church had been destroyed by the Protestant soldiery. It was a Wexford movement, unsupported by the mass of the island, and it had no more at first than 5000 men, with only a few fowling-pieces and no other firearms. But it began to have successes, and by the end of the month its numbers swelled to 30,000, of whom perhaps one-third were armed. In June the inevitable success of the regulars appeared, the town of Wexford surrendered, and before the end of the month Father Murphy himself was taken prisoner, from which date may be counted the end of the rebellion. He was flogged with five hundred lashes, and as these failed to kill him he was next put to death and his body burned at the door of a local Catholic gentleman, in order, as the victors said, "that he should enjoy the smell of a roasted priest."

Immediately on the failure of the rebellion followed Pitt's buying up of the Irish Parliament. The rebellion, repression, garrisoning, and the wholesale purchase of Parliamentarians which followed cost some unknown sum; it cannot have been *less* than twenty million pounds.

The Irish Protestant gentry in the Parliament of Dublin were bought up in every conceivable fashion—by the creation of a number of well-paid posts, by the direct purchase both of the members themselves and of the patrons of the constituencies for which they sat, and by the giving of peerages.

On January 22, 1799, the Irish Government introduced the proposed legislative union between England and Ireland, and on May 21, 1800, Castlereagh, whose patriotism had long disappeared, got a majority of sixty for leave to bring in the Bill destroying the Irish legislature, for which the final vote was taken on July 7. The English Parliament had confirmed the Union on July 2, and on August 1 the Royal assent was given for the Union to take effect from January 1 of the next year, 1801.

**The Second Phase of the Revolutionary War: its Character.** The second phase of the Revolutionary War lasts

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from the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, being the renewed declaration of war by England on France, in May 1803, and does not close until the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in June 1815. It covers, therefore, twelve years. And it differs from the first phase in the following respects:

(1) The complete domination of Napoleon, who becomes Emperor in the second year of the war (1804), throws the Revolutionary effort into a single hand, and that the hand of the greatest military genius Europe had known since the Romans; one who was also the greatest legislator and the most energetic and lucid of all rulers.

(2) The ideas and system of the French Revolution, firmly settled in the west of Europe, were carried, through the success of France against the renewed coalitions, all over the Continent — up to the borders of Russia. Much of the social system, still more the legal system, and, more than all, the general ideas of the new time were established all over Europe.

(3) At the same time, partly by reaction against Napoleon, more by the example of France and "the religion of patriotism," which England as well as France had set as an example to Europe, the spirit of *Nationalism* takes root. The old monarchies controlling populations of mixed origins lose their moral strength, and difference of race and language become of greater and greater importance, so that Europe henceforward becomes more and more conscious of different nations, each devoted to its national existence and regarding this as even superior to the old claims of transcendental religion. Under the surface the great line of cleavage between the Protestant and Catholic cultures remains, but what men became conscious of is their German race, their Slav race, their Polish nationality, or their Italian nationality.

(4) The idea of a compromise with the Revolution was abandoned. The thing became a duel to the death between the Revolutionary idea, with Napoleon at its head, and the old monarchies and oligarchies. Of these all save Russia succumbed to the French armies and the popular enfranchisement to which they appealed. Yet to this also there was another kind of exception in Spain, where a French occupation and usurpation of the throne (1807) roused intense resistance, the populace being indifferent or hostile to the Revolutionary ideas of social equality and the rest.

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(5) The coming struggle is often represented as a duel between Napoleon and England. This is an error, due to that worst of all the tendencies that falsify history—the tendency to simplify a complex problem. Colour is lent to this idea of an Anglo-French duel by angry exclamations of Napoleon himself, and naturally by the bias of his permanent opponents in England, but the truth is otherwise. Where many factors are involved each must be weighed and given its due place. The struggle was one between the Revolutionary idea, now led by Napoleon, and *all* the pre-Revolutionary traditions of government and society. The Prussian monarchy and Junkers were an enemy; the Russian religion was an enemy; the house of Habsburg and popular loyalty towards it was an enemy; the Papacy, which was outraged, and with it the universal Catholic sentiment throughout Europe, was an enemy; and so was the Spanish detestation of the foreigner. All these appear in 1803–15, each in turn with particular vigour at particular points in the struggle.

(6) England remaining supreme at sea, and an effort at invasion proving impossible, her population, manufactures, and wealth continue to increase, and she subsidizes one coalition after another against Napoleon. They all fail. The money seems to have been thrown away. Napoleon's blockade forbidding Continental nations to trade with England and waging a ceaseless war of capture against English merchantmen at sea is on the point of succeeding. English paper money progressively loses its value, and the country is progressively in greater and greater danger, until the capital event of the whole war—Napoleon's quarrel with his ally, Russia, and his determination to invade that country.

In the Russian disaster of 1812 Napoleon loses the unquestioned might of his armies. They are imperilled. In 1813 he is beaten at the decisive battle of Leipzig, which is the turning-point of his fortunes. The Napoleonic power is forced out of Spain and the Germanies and rolled back to France, France itself is invaded, Napoleon has to abdicate and is confined by the Great Powers in the island of Elba (1814). In the next year (1815) he escapes from Elba, and makes one last effort (the Hundred Days) to rally the exhausted French, who are now divided in their support of him. Vast armies are raised to complete his overthrow. He meets the first two groups of them in Belgium before the rest come up, and is finally defeated at

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Waterloo by these two armies under the command of the Englishman Wellington<sup>1</sup> and the Prussian Blücher.

Even had Waterloo gone otherwise Napoleon's resistance would not in any case have been maintained, seeing the huge forces that were now following up against him; but his defeat at Waterloo was sufficient to decide the matter before their arrival. Napoleon takes refuge on an English ship, and is henceforward held a close prisoner on the island of St Helena.

The Revolutionary effort has therefore (apparently) failed; the Bourbon monarchy is restored in France; most of the other old monarchies and oligarchies of Europe, after considerable rearrangements of territory, are also restored.

But morally the Revolution succeeded everywhere except in Russia and England. The struggle had been maintained so long, the new laws, the new ideas, and the new distribution of property had had so many years in which to take root, that a new Europe principally founded upon the Revolution was the real outcome of the struggle.

The outward symbol of the acceptance of the Revolutionary gospel is the prevalence of the weights and measures originally decreed by the first Parliaments of the Revolution in Paris.

England, however, remained intact; her institutions came out of the struggle unchanged, her prestige vastly increased, her aristocratic organization of society still vigorous, her own confidence and that of others in the progress of her wealth confirmed. The new civilization affected her indirectly, of course, throughout the next two generations. She was gradually modified—but slowly and without shock. Above all, there was no diminution in what had been the essential quality of England since the Civil War of the seventeenth century, her complete unity, the product of aristocracy—*i.e.*, the acceptance by the whole people, as a matter of course, of government by a superior class. The Revolutionary idea worked adversely to all the traditions of England, especially in the matter of religion, but it worked indirectly, slowly, and its noticeable effects only began to appear very late—a full lifetime after Waterloo.

**The Causes of the New War.** The Peace of Amiens broke down over Malta. It was solemnly agreed in the terms of the peace, and was perhaps the most important point therein,

<sup>1</sup> The Wellesley family was Anglo-Irish of the 'Garrison.' No one to-day can think of Wellington as other than English.

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that England should evacuate Malta and hand it back to its old government, the Knights of St John. The English Government made every delay and excuse to prevent this stipulation being carried out, and during the angry discussions thus aroused broke off relations with Napoleon and declared war, retaining the island.

On the face of it, therefore, the responsibility for the new war in Europe, with all its consequences, lies upon Pitt or, technically, upon his colleague Addington,<sup>1</sup> whom he had put up as Prime Minister to serve in his place during a temporary retirement imposed on him by events in connection with his Irish policy.

The issue was not simple. England had not made peace merely in order to take a rest and begin again. Had that been the case there would have been no necessity for making peace at all. On both sides the desire for peace had been sincere, but each side vehemently suspected the other, the French soon coming to believe that the English did not mean to keep their word, the English persuaded that Napoleon would never abandon the effort to found a new Europe.

It had been the calculation of Pitt and of the English governing classes, including a great part of the mercantile and financial direction of the City of London, that with the peace English trade and wealth would be unhampered, and that was their main reason for making it. For the expense of the war had been enormous, the corresponding strain increasingly dangerous, and the dread of a financial catastrophe ever present. But Napoleon had not and would not intend the peace to mean this, because his concern was with the Western European continent which he was organizing, and whose commercial resurrection, especially in the Low Countries and particularly in the matter of Antwerp, he was bound to protect and foster. The Dutch and Belgian ports were showing great activity in shipbuilding and the rest; an expedition was being prepared to recover the French control of San Domingo, in the West Indies, lost through a Negro revolt, and by some this was used as a pretext for the new war. With many more the French preparations were genuinely believed to be intended for an invasion of England—which, it must be remembered, had already been envisaged before the peace.

On March 11, 1803, the militia was called out; Napoleon

<sup>1</sup> Addington was the son of the man who had been doctor to Pitt's father, the great Chatham.

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vehemently protested against this as an act of war—having already had a violent scene with the English Ambassador, Lord Whitworth, in the month before on the point of Malta. The English Government advanced towards a breach of the treaty by putting forward a proposal to hold Malta for ten years, and this was, of course, the breaking-point. On May 12 the English Ambassador left Paris, and on the 18th the British Government declared war upon France. Before doing so it had seized a thousand Dutch and French vessels in English ports with their cargoes, to the value of eight millions, while still at peace: Napoleon replied by holding all Englishmen still within his dominions as prisoners, and so they remained, not in the sense of being incarcerated, but marked by his police and prevented from going whither they would.

**The New Coalition is prepared. The Proposal to invade England.** Pitt must now prepare a new coalition, if that should be possible—that is, he must continue the now long-fixed tradition of England, the finding of allied Continental forces to fight against France, while she held the sea. The movement towards such a coalition begins with Russia, but it is brought to a head by the putting to death of the Duke of Enghien.

A conspiracy against the life of Napoleon was undertaken by the *émigrés* with the support of the Bourbon princes, and worked from England. Napoleon believed that the young Duke of Enghien, the heir of the Condés, a junior branch of the Bourbon royal family, was at the head of it or mixed up in it. He had this young man seized on neutral territory, in Baden, just beyond the Rhine, brought him to Paris, and there had him shot on March 21, 1804. It was this conspiracy which led to the declaration of the French Empire with Napoleon as Emperor, and rule hereditary in his family, shortly afterwards.

The killing of the Duke of Enghien roused the most violent feelings, Russia in particular demanding the withdrawal of certain French garrisons from North Germany. Pitt was ready to subsidize, Sweden would give her adherence; and Pitt suggested a complete coalition of Prussia, Austria, and Russia, for the wiping out of the whole Revolutionary effort and the restoration of all Western Europe to the condition in which it had been before the Revolution had broken out.

In reply Napoleon proposed an invasion of England, and

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gathered a large force for that purpose with vessels suitable for the transport of his troops, which were concentrated in a great camp outside Boulogne and at other points along the northern French coast. His further policy was to meet the imperilling coalition by using in his favour a confederation of the minor German states beyond the Rhine and the alliance of Spain, a country at that time strongly opposed to England on account of raids upon her commerce.

By early 1805 the plan of invasion had matured, and the English efforts at forming a new coalition against France were in full swing. The invasion could not take place without at least a temporary command of the Channel, and the French fleet under Villeneuve, blockaded in Toulon by the English, escaped from the blockade in March 1805; but it failed later to effect a junction with other forces which might have permitted this temporary opportunity for invasion; and meanwhile England offered a subsidy of one and a quarter million for each hundred thousand men—£12 5s. per man—to those who should attack Napoleon. Russia and Austria prepared to do so, but Prussia played her own game and still refused to join.

**Austerlitz and Trafalgar.** The hesitation of Prussia was a great anxiety to Pitt and to the Russians and Austrians; but the Emperors of the last two were, to all appearance, overwhelmingly stronger than Napoleon in combination, even without Prussia, and it was thought that they would suffice. By August 1805 Napoleon had abandoned the intention of invading England and turned to meet the new threat against him by land. On the 13th of that month he dictated for hours an admirable plan of campaign to his secretary, who took it down in the little house outside Boulogne where the Emperor was staying. The Grand Army, as it was called since the new organization of the French forces under the Emperor, concentrated on August 28, turned right about face, and marched for the Danube.

In the third week of October came the pivotal point in the new war; the Grand Army, after a co-ordinated march unequalled for rapidity and synchrony in military history, appeared on the upper waters of the Danube, surprised and surrounded Mack, the Austrian general, in Ulm, and received his preliminaries to capitulation. The date of this was October 17, 1805.

On October 21 Nelson, with a slight inferiority of ships and approximate equality in weight of broadside, completely defeated

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the French and Spanish fleets a little westward of Cape Trafalgar, on the Atlantic side of the Straits of Gibraltar, but was himself killed in the course of the action.

Henceforward it was clear that the war would appear settled upon two clear bases. The French and their allies, including the smaller German states they had organized and territories annexed or virtually dependent upon them in the Netherlands and Italy, must make good their power by land. If they succeeded in doing this permanently the sea-power of England would be unable to win the war. But, on the other hand, that sea-power had now become unquestioned, and would remain established with what is often called 'command of the sea' until or if French successes by land should permit what is always a matter of slow growth, the creation of a new and efficient navy. With full control of Western Europe, its ports and dockyards and resources in sailors, there can be no question but that such a Napoleonic sea-power could have been produced in time; it was a race between the existing English command of the sea and what was to become the rapidly developing French command of the Continent.

Here it must be remarked that the phrase 'command of the sea' has of late years in England been given an exaggerated meaning. Even in modern times, with mechanical fighting appliances and rapid transmission of information, there is no such thing as absolute command of the sea; the phrase that "the frontiers of England at war are the shores of the enemy," like the old Carthaginian phrase that "the Romans could not wash their hands in the sea without our leave," expresses a truth, but command of the sea never yet did or could destroy an enemy in command of great land districts of the same level of culture as the maritime Power. What unquestioned superiority at sea does effect is to save from invasion those who possess it. It also permits blockade and a corresponding interference with wealth and commerce; it allows the transport of troops by water, whenever this advantage—which is by no means universal and is always restricted in value—can be used. Contemporary observers were under no illusion as to the respective importance of the land and water campaigns: Pitt saw clearly that permanently established victories of the enemy by land would mean his final victory, and on hearing of the capitulation of Ulm burst out into an angry exclamation.

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"Don't believe a word of it!" he shouted. But Ulm was followed by something far more serious.

Napoleon still had before him the unbroken main forces of Austria and Russia. He met them on the field of Austerlitz on December 2, 1805, the anniversary of his coronation as Emperor, and overwhelmed them in a decisive battle which gave him a different position in Europe from that which he had hitherto occupied. Pitt despaired of the future, and died a few weeks after the news of Austerlitz had reached England. Fox, with a new Administration under Grenville attempted to make peace, but was doomed to die in the same year, on September 13.

The two greatest men in English public life had disappeared, but in aristocracy of the English type individuals have no decisive importance; though Nelson, the greatest of the admirals, and Fox and Pitt were gone, the aristocratic commercial and financial strength of England remained: blunders were committed which would not have been committed before, but they were not fatal; the English governing class never failed to provide a sufficiency of competent leaders in arms or policy.

**The Defeat of Prussia and the Berlin Decrees.** Prussia in 1806 decided, too late, for war. It may be wondered why the best individual army in Europe—as it was believed to be, and not without good grounds—should now be launched, after having been kept out of the struggle in the crisis of the year before.

The answer to this question is that Prussia had little doubt that whenever her army was put into the field it would necessarily be victorious, but had no desire to make the effort if others could do it for her. She was waiting to see how Russians and Austrians would fare at the hands of the French. She thought that with their numbers they would win without her risking anything. Since they had lost, she would now maintain herself by taking up the game, which she was the better able to do because upon her first success the Russian and Austrian powers, which were still intact and which new recruitment would easily bring back to their old numbers, would join it.

The withdrawal of French garrisons from Germany was demanded by Prussia in an ultimatum which was backed by a quarter of a million men, and expired on October 1, 1806. Six days later, on the 14th, her armies were routed at the twin battles of Jena and Auerstädt, won by Napoleon and

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his marshal Davout. Napoleon entered Berlin on the 27th of the month, cheered by the populace of that capital: for popular opinion throughout Germany was divided, and the Revolutionary effort had a wide appeal there. The routed fragments of the Prussian army were relentlessly pursued, and pinned up against the town of Lübeck, on the Baltic, where they were destroyed. Blücher, who was in command, was captured. But a small portion of the Prussian forces escaped eastward and joined the Russians.

Napoleon proceeded to issue the Decrees of Berlin on November 21. These decrees instituted what was known as the Continental Blockade. The financial power of England, upon whose subsidies the various enemies of Napoleon relied, was to be crippled by the forbidding of English trade to and from the ports over which Napoleon had control. There followed a battle against the Russians at Eylau, fought in a winter snow-storm early in 1807; it was indecisive as well as most murderous, and, though followed by a Russian retreat, raised the prestige of that Power; but in the following summer at Friedland Napoleon inflicted a total defeat on the Russians, and the Tsar was prepared for peace.

He and Napoleon met. The young autocrat, the Tsar Alexander, who was of a generous temper and a trifle mad, had always felt a great admiration for the Emperor, and ever since the bombardment of the neutral Danish capital had felt antagonistic towards England. He now allied himself with the French, and one can say that from that moment Napoleon might, had he chosen, have possessed in peace the position he had acquired and have proceeded to organize that new Europe the establishment of which had become his ambition.

**Spain and the Peninsular War.** But he chose in that same year, 1807, to increase his liabilities. He prepared to attempt the uniting of Spain with the rest of the territory over which he had direct or indirect control. He had it in his power to destroy Prussia for good. He abandoned the opportunity, contenting himself with reducing her force to a certain maximum. The object of this the Prussian governing class of squires and their intellectual leaders in the universities defeated by short service and intensive training, so that under the surface a very large new Prussian army was preparing. Though it would do nothing active until it were certain of victory—for such has been the consistent Prussian tradition—it was an increasing force.

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Napoleon's reasons for acting against Spain and substituting the rule of his brother for that of the Bourbon dynasty (which, it is true, was in the last stages of decay) have been endlessly discussed. Certainly he would not have entered Spain had he understood what Spanish feeling was. The root of his error was religious: he was—like nearly all the intellects trained in the French school of his youth—sceptical, though his profound nature always held in reserve the power of returning to the traditional faith, in which he devoutly died.

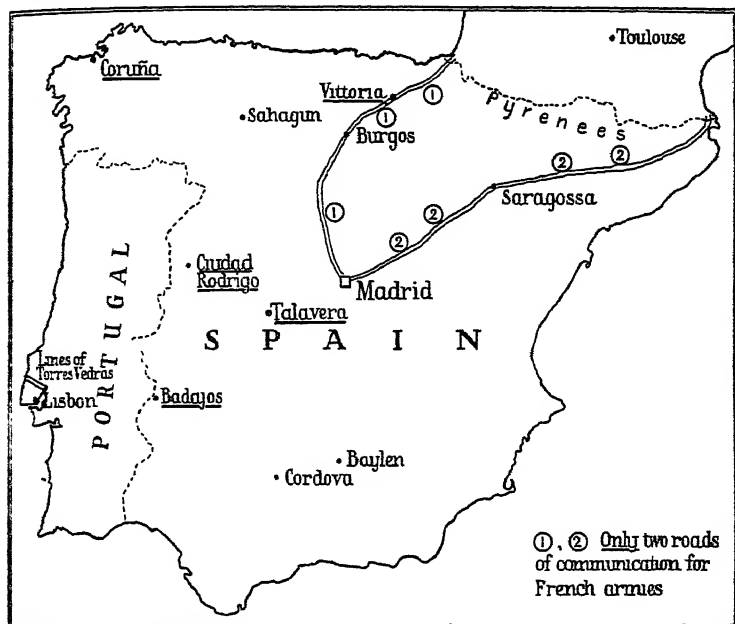
At any rate, in 1807, at the height of his power, he underestimated the national feeling of Spain and still more the fighting value of that intense religious force with which Spanish patriotism was inextricably interwoven. The Revolutionary armies had everywhere outraged religious feeling. When Napoleon's regiments came into Spain such outrages continued, especially in the treatment of the monasteries. That the nation should be clerical was enough to bring it into his contempt, although Napoleon had had the wisdom to retain Catholicism as the state religion in France, and had demanded the presence and blessing of the Pope at his coronation in Notre-Dame three years before.

On May 2, 1808, Madrid rose against the French garrison. The revolt was barbarously suppressed, but the Spanish spirit proved unconquerable. Throughout the country there broke out cruel and determined guerrilla warfare, and for the first time since the beginning of the wars the English Government determined upon serious action by land. To support the Spanish guerrilla troops and the remains of the Spanish regular royalist army in the south English troops were landed. The proposition was the more favoured because, for the first time, a body of Napoleon's regular army had been compelled to capitulate in the open field: on their return northward from the loot of Cordova a large detachment of French troops were surrounded and laid down their arms at Baylen, just south of the passage of the Sierra Morena.

A British force of 9000 men, swollen by reinforcements to 13,000, finally growing to 16,000, was acting in Portugal by the summer of 1808, under Sir John Moore. He proposed to march northward towards the Pyrenees, in order to cut Napoleon's communications. He got as far as Sahagun in that winter. Napoleon, who had already dispersed great bodies of Spanish,

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marched after him from the capital with great rapidity, then handing the command to Soult; Moore had to retire with equal precipitation in the last days of the year. He retreated towards the sea under terrible conditions, losing guns and transport as he went, with the French in pursuit. He stood just in front of the port of Coruña, on January 16, 1809, and successfully held



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up the French, though falling himself in the battle—the theme of fine verses which have preserved his legend. As might be expected, his action is reported to-day on the one side as the ruin of Napoleon's plan for holding Spain, and on the other as the successful driving into the sea of the English forces by the Napoleonic forces.

But henceforward, in spite of Moore's failure, "the Spanish Ulcer," as Napoleon came to call it, could not but continue to drain the strength of the Empire. Napoleon had miscalculated in thinking that the occupation of Spain would be rapid and complete; the whole people were in rebellion against him. His

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armies and their communications were only safe within the range of their own fire.

Worst of all, the Grand Army was now cut in two; hundreds of miles separated the Spanish from the German sections; nevertheless, the Emperor's plan of a new and united Europe would have finally succeeded save for his capital error in 1812.

With the Grand Army thus cut into two widely separated sections, and with that half of it which was in Spain subject to continual attrition and decline in moral value, the moment was opportune for a renewed attempt at victory against the Revolution and its captain. Once more did Austria accept subsidies from England, and with the spring of the year 200,000 men were advancing westward against Bavaria, an ally of the French, and against the French garrisons in Western Germany, ultimately in the hope of destroying the Revolutionary armies, if initial victories should swell the forces of the new coalition.

**Aspern, Talavera, and Wagram.** Napoleon's generals facing Austria in his absence blundered. Napoleon arrived on the scene, and was able to advance on Vienna and occupy it, but the main Austrian army lay intact just to the north of the town, beyond the river Danube. He attacked it on May 21 and 22, 1809, and suffered for the first time in his career a check which may properly be called a defeat, in the action generally known as the battle of Aspern. He had to retire beyond the Danube: and there ran through the anti-Revolutionary centres of Europe, for the first time in fifteen years, a feeling that the tide had turned.

But it had not. His Marshals counselled falling back on France, but the Emperor preferred to stake everything on a further chance of victory. All that summer his forces stood firm round Vienna, watched by the intact Austrian army beyond the Danube. He summoned reinforcements from every side.

Meanwhile the command of the English army in Lisbon had been taken over by Wellesley, much in the same moment as that in which Austria had first moved against France, in April 1809.

Wellesley quite underestimated the task he had undertaken (he complained of bad information). He marched on Madrid with his 20,000 from these islands and more than double that number of Spanish allies, of whose quality he complained. They were many of them but partially trained, but contemporaries were of opinion that a man of more subtle or more sympathetic

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character might have better used the great opportunity of a whole nation in revolt against foreign invaders. As it was, Wellesley throughout all his time in Spain continually worked in a spirit hostile to, and contemptuous of, the Spanish people, whom he should have used to their fullest capacity. On the road to Madrid from Portugal he was thrown back by French forces numerically inferior but not hampered by insufficiently trained contingents. Wellesley showed great skill in extricating himself at Talavera from the entanglement he had got himself into, and successfully effected his retreat back to Lisbon, where he fortified the promontory on which the town stands by drawing, from water to water, the triple lines of Torres Vedras behind which he was secure, being free to use the sea. His Government, partly to keep up spirits in so doubtful a situation and partly to reward what had been, after the first blunder, a fine military operation, raised him to the rank of Viscount, with the title of Wellington. This battle of Talavera took place on July 28, 1809.

Meanwhile the other, distant, separated half of the Grand Army had justified Napoleon's daring in refusing to retreat after Aspern. The reinforcements which had reached the Emperor permitted him to take the field with equal numbers, and on July 6 of that year 1809, he had pushed the main Austrian army back off the plains north of the Danube in the battle of Wagram.

The political results of that battle were far greater than its military value warranted. No guns were taken, and no appreciable number of prisoners; the great effort only compelled the Austrian army, under that excellent general the Archduke Charles, to retire; but it compelled them to retire in a direction away from their capital where they would be cut off from succour, and it restored the idea of Napoleon's invincibility, checking the formation of a combined force against him. All this was clinched by a peace signed at Vienna that autumn—October 14, 1809.

**The Walcheren Expedition.** Not content with the grave disappointments suffered by the anti-Revolutionary policy in this year, the failure to advance into Spain, the retreat after Talavera, and the rehabilitation of Napoleon at Wagram, Portland's English Ministry, with Canning as its chief figure, gave a startling proof of their military incapacity. In order to create a diversion in favour of Austria they raised what was for England the very

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large force of 40,000 men; they had command of the sea and could land where they willed. Not heeding the advice of their competent military allies in Europe to direct the force towards the shores of Napoleonic Germany, where a reaction against the power of the Emperor was beginning, the force was sent under the incompetent Lord Chatham, Pitt's elder brother, the son and heir of the great statesman of the last generation, to the island of Walcheren, at the mouth of the Scheldt.

Before winter the expedition was a disastrous failure, and not only a disastrous failure, but actually not undertaken until its success would have been futile; for the force did not sail at all until three weeks after Wagram! Before Christmas half of it was out of action through disease. The French had no need to attack; the remainder had to be withdrawn on December 23, and Portland and Canning resigned.

A new Ministry was formed under the nominal headship of Perceval, with Lord Liverpool at the War Office, and the entry of Palmerston into prominence as his Under-Secretary; while the brother of Wellington took over Foreign Affairs. But the names of the individuals among the English gentry who succeed each other in these political combinations are of no great significance; the fate of England was to be decided by the issue of the war, and that issue would end in the victory or failure of the Revolution in arms on the continent of Europe.

**The Worst of the Strain.** The two full years 1810 and 1811 and up to the early summer of 1812 were a period during which hostilities halted with everything for the future in favour of Napoleon, and the final victory of the Revolutionary scheme—a renovated and victoriously united Europe. The strain of the Continental blockade became increasingly serious for England. Although the average tonnage for export was kept up and even increased, the suffering imposed upon the swelling industrial population was terrible, and grew more and more severe. Raw materials were doubling and trebling in price, wheat had more than doubled in the last months of this period, and the insurance against the capture of English ships by foreign privateers had so risen that £50,000 was charged in an extreme case for a vessel of 100 tons burden on a voyage of no more than across the Narrows of the Channel, from the Thames and back. Less than half a dozen years before average insurance had run from six guineas upward; in 1811 insurance for the Baltic trade was £18

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and £22. Freight and insurance combined rose to fantastic heights, eleven times the normal on wheat, fourteen times the normal on tallow, etc. In the year 1811 French exports were actually increasing, at a moment when English exports had dropped by one-tenth and English ships were being continually captured by the French privateers. (In 1809 571 ships were captured; 619 in 1810; 470 ships in 1811.)

**The Financial Strain.** From the early stages of the great Revolutionary War, although England was manufacturing by machinery and was therefore already the workshop of the world, there was still greater financial strain. The war was financed by loans from the increasing capital of the wealthier classes, but the interest on these had to be met out of the taxes, and the burden upon the community was very heavy. Napoleon's system of Continental blockade, which so very nearly succeeded and would have succeeded but for his disasters in Russia, had an effect on the currency of England by which we can test how intense the strain had become. Gold had long gone out of circulation, and the more the fear of invasion increased the more impossible it was to restore real money. The paper money remained at par for three years; it was not till the second phase of the Revolutionary War that it began to give way. By 1803 it had broken to a discount of 10 per cent.; then came a rally due to caution in the emission of paper; but after the critical year 1809 it was impossible to keep this up. The number of notes in circulation had to be increased; discount rose to between 13 and 16 per cent., and just before Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 it had risen to 20 per cent. The momentum thus created was not lost when things had taken a turn in favour of the allied Powers and against the Revolutionary armies; the maximum discount in the year 1815, the moment of decisive victory, had risen to 25 per cent.

But all this time the finances of Napoleon were sound; he refused to allow paper money, insisting in all his dominions upon real money—that is, gold and silver—and had he won at the end of the struggle they would probably still be the permanent currency of Europe to-day. As it is, all the world knows how the fact that the experiment in paper money proved successful and carried England through the strain rendered it a permanent device, and has made possible the ruin of all systems of currency to-day.

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In Spain there was a deadlock; though the quality of the French troops was continually declining and the Spanish guerrillas were as active and as brave as ever, yet no serious decline in the French military power over the peninsula appeared. Murderous actions such as that of Albuera were fought with no appreciable effect upon either side; Masséna had been beaten back from Portugal in 1810; but Wellington's base and his opportunity of reinforcement remained, though his position was precarious, and the number of his effective troops of British origin had fallen to 8000. Rodrigo and Badajos, frontier fortresses, were captured, useful enough if ever a march upon the Spanish capital should be possible to the Spaniards and their English allies.

An unfortunate war against the United States was a further handicap to the resources of the English; but just at that moment there was taking place that change in European affairs which was to turn the tide backward against the Emperor, and leave him at last defeated and exiled.

He had raised himself to the fullest of his power; he had married the daughter of the Habsburgs, Marie Louise, and though the burden of conscription imposed upon his allies and the French people exasperated and weakened them, yet French finance and currency were sound, the machinery of government intact, and the Napoleonic military machine invincible. But there was a condition to all this; and that condition was what had been at first a real friendship and alliance between Napoleon and the Autocrat of All the Russias. Quarrels over the status of Poland—which both Napoleon and the Tsar desired to restore, but both for the advantage of their own policy—a bad fall in the value of Russian currency, due largely to Napoleon's Continental blockade, and a similar fall in Russian trade with England, the personal hatred felt for the Revolution by almost all the members of the Tsar's family, circle, and court, and a general quarrel, the seeds of which had been sown when the French Emperor had married his Habsburg wife, were growing to a head.

Had Napoleon grasped what would be meant by the peril of losing Russian support he would have sacrificed almost anything to its maintenance; but, as it was, he conceived that even this new task now looming before him—a victory over his last opponent—was capable of accomplishment; and all during 1811

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he was beginning his preparations for war, which the Tsar on his side felt competent to meet. Troops to the number, all told, of nearly 700,000 men, over 600,000 of whom were destined to join in the invasion, were being gathered by Napoleon. The distant Spanish field, already so severely weakened, was sacrificed to the great effort, under the idea that, should that effort succeed, the French power could return at will and re-establish itself completely in the Peninsula.

Thus was the turning-point reached in the story of that effort to make a united Europe through the Revolutionary wars. At midsummer 1812 the greatest force yet assembled in Europe crossed the Russian frontier and began the invasion.

**The Effect on Spain.** The effect of the new situation on Spain was what might have been expected. The French forces, dwindling in fighting value and declining in numbers, fell back before the Anglo-Spanish advance. But here Wellington had again miscalculated; he entered Madrid while Napoleon's brother, who had been made King of Spain, retired eastward, and this was in the month of August 1812. But the occupation of the capital could not last; the French troops summoned up from the south and those converging from the north made the holding of the centre of the country in a regular fashion impossible, and once again Wellington fell back in his turn upon Portugal. The real issue was to be decided, and could only be decided, in Russia. ✓

**The Russian Campaign.** Two main bodies—the northern with Napoleon along the high road from Kovno to Moscow, the southern one under his brother mainly from round Warsaw—were designed to converge in the neighbourhood of Smolensk, and pinch the Russian forces between them, for the Russian armies were not as numerous as the invaders. But Napoleon's brother was slow in starting and slow in execution; the retreat of the Russians was successful; they escaped from the pincers, and Napoleon reached Smolensk without a decision.

Some advised him to winter there; but the difficulty of handling this enormous mass of men and provisioning them, especially under winter conditions, the already immense length of his communications, and the strain to which his allies and France herself were being subjected by this new effort made the Emperor decide to go forward and obtain, if possible, the hoped-for decision. About a week's march from Moscow the

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retiring Russians were compelled to stand, in the neighbourhood of the town of Borodino (September 7, 1812), not far from the river Moscowa.

By this time the number of the French forces wasted on communications, sickness, and the rest had brought the numbers of the opposing forces to a rough equality; and a desperately fought action resulted in a further retreat of the Russians, so that the French were free to advance and take the capital. But there was still no decision. After the French had occupied Moscow it was burned down, probably by design; an early winter threatened, and Napoleon, vainly waiting for peace negotiations which the Tsar refused to begin, was forced, through the impossibility of remaining through the winter where he was, to begin the famous and disastrous retreat. The climatic difficulties of this have been exaggerated; but the military consequences are beyond exaggeration. The Grand Army, save that portion of it which was attempting to retain Spain and those who were scattered in the garrisons throughout the French Empire and Germany, had ceased to exist. Most important of all, the great body of Napoleonic cavalry, which had been one of the principal instruments of the victories, had disappeared and could never be restored.

**Leipzig and the Breakdown.** Napoleon attempted to rally his forces in 1813 with yet another draft of conscripts, though the murmurs against that burden were becoming loud even in France, and more in the non-French territory under Napoleon's rule. He restored the numbers (but not the quality) of his troops sufficiently to make an effort.

Those who had remained allied or neutral until the Russian disaster were now combined against the Emperor: he all but defeated them at Bautzen, though his victory would hardly have restored the old state of affairs—but, as a fact, he failed through what was now becoming noticeable in him, occasional phases of mental fatigue. He was not sufficiently prompt in going in person to see that his Marshal, Ney, executed a certain movement. At last, standing round Leipzig with 150,000 men and three great bodies of the enemy converging upon him, amounting to double his force, he attempted to beat them off in detail during a mighty struggle of three days (October 16–19, 1813); but their ranks joined, and they pressed him inward on the town. On the third day the remains of his broken army began the re-

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treat westward. It reached France by the end of the year, hopelessly weakened by disease, but the Emperor would not give up the struggle; he summoned all his energies, and was never more brilliant in strategy than in the campaign he undertook after his pursuing enemies had invaded France. But they were too strong for him, the country was exhausted, and in April his Marshals told him they could not continue the struggle. One of them went over to the allies; and on April 11, 1814, Napoleon abdicated.

His enemies gave him for a prison or tiny kingdom the island of Elba; and the old Governments, who would seem to have triumphed at last over the Revolution, restored the legitimate royal house in France and proceeded to negotiate at Vienna for a settlement of Europe.

**The Hundred Days and Waterloo.** But Napoleon left Elba in the spring of 1815, with a small force of veterans whom he had been permitted to keep as a guard on the island. He landed near Cannes, between that town and Antibes, and such was his prestige and the energy he could inspire in his little command that, what with the rapidity of his march and the attraction of his name, he found himself in Paris restored. The Bourbons fled, and one last army was at Napoleon's command.

But his subordinates were doubtful; most of them had passed from one Government to another, and were anxious for the future. The nearest of the enemies converging upon him from all sides were the Prussians, stretched along the river Meuse round Namur, and a mixed force of Germans, Belgians, and British under Wellington to the west of these.

Napoleon effected a strategic surprise. He came in between the two bodies, defeated the Prussians at Ligny, and in a second battle on the same day held up Wellington's force at Quatre Bras. But Ligny was not decisive; the Prussians got away, and forty-eight hours later, on Sunday, June 18, 1815, the Emperor came upon Wellington's command on its defensive line in front of the village of Waterloo, half a day's march south of Brussels. Wellington's defensive line was maintained from the middle of the day, when the action opened, until the afternoon, against somewhat superior numbers which delivered determined and repeated attack. By mid-afternoon the Prussians under Blücher were beginning to exercise pressure on the French flank, and by evening the partially surrounded command of Napoleon broke in its last attack and was routed. The

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pursuit was continued vigorously throughout the night, and French armed resistance was at an end.

Napoleon took refuge on an English ship, the *Bellerophon*, was put on to another at Plymouth, and taken to St Helena, there to be held a prisoner until he died six years later; and the victorious Powers resumed their Congress of Vienna.

**The Peninsula and America.** While these great things were happening the Spaniards and their English allies in the Peninsula were feeling the full advantage of the strain upon, and later defeat of, Napoleon in Russia. Wellington's command there was able to begin an advance against the reduced French forces, who now numbered less than 200,000 men, and were composed of worse material than ever, recruits who had been trained on the march. He thrust French resistance back at the battle of Vittoria on June 21, 1813, crossed the frontier on October 7, and had reached Toulouse, where the English were engaged in an action as late as April 1814, the French there not yet knowing that the Emperor had abdicated.

During this same period had broken out that inglorious and futile war with the United States of America already mentioned, in which there was not a little of sentiment. For the hatred of the former Colonies was very strong throughout every class in England, and the defeat of thirty years before still rankled deeply. But the cause of the war was, of course, more serious; it was the protest of the Americans against the claim made by England to arrest and search vessels of commerce at will. The English fleet maintained a partial blockade of American trade, but the loss of English commercial shipping was very serious, and American fighting ships showed unexpected power. An English force landed and burned the Capitol at Washington—an act the memory of which survived intensely on the other side of the Atlantic for a lifetime; but the conflict was leading to no success, and this country was glad to abandon it.

The other minor events of the time were but the seeds of important things which were to develop later, and will be dealt with in their proper place, in connection with the nineteenth century. There was a stirring of the Irish resistance to the Union, and particularly of organized Catholic effort against it, which began with the appearance of a young barrister called Daniel O'Connell in 1805 and a resolution passed by the Catholic Union five years later.

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On the sub-continent of Australia a new colony had been founded, not of set purpose to expand the territory under English rule or to attempt a new colonial empire, but rather as a convict settlement. Eighteen years after the first regular Government of New South Wales was established there were no more than some six or seven hundred land-holders, the majority of whom were men who had served their sentence after transportation. Such were the small seeds of the new colonial empire of English and Irish stock, but we shall see how the fruits of maritime victory against Napoleon, having given England the Cape, Ceylon, and an untrammelled supremacy in the Pacific, were to expand into widespread white dominions of the later nineteenth century.

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**Nature of the English Nineteenth Century.** The English nineteenth century, counting from the close of the Napoleonic wars to the death of Queen Victoria, has about it two main interests: the vast numerical expansion of Great Britain, and the increasing hostility between the English and the Irish. The former is universally apparent: it is as salient an historical fact of the last hundred years as is the corresponding expansion of the United States. The latter is much less easily perceived. Its vital importance is masked by the diminution of Irish numbers and wealth at home and the dispersion of a rapidly increasing Irish people overseas, among nations in no one of which do they form a determining element but in all of which—Britain itself, Canada, the United States, Australasia—they only remain an acclimatized minority. Nevertheless, the story of the nineteenth century is not only a story of the expansion of Britain, but also the story of a duel between England and Ireland, the quality of which is only misunderstood by those who judge all things numerically and who miss the effect of quality in human affairs.

There are in this period of over eighty-five full years—1815-1901—two phases: the first, a preparatory one during which the expansion begins and is organized, may be best called "The Ascent of England"; the second, during which the fullness of that expansion appears and the summit of England's greatness is reached, may be called "The Climax."

They are divided one from another in the midst of the century by the decisive episode of the Great Irish Famine.

**Divisions of this Period.** We are approaching, in the lifetime after the battle of Waterloo, from the summer of 1815 to the end of the century, what is perhaps the most extraordinary and exceptional episode in the story of any ancient and settled nation. A people with a civilization behind them of nearly two thousand years, retaining their old framework and the great mass of their traditions (those of the last three centuries at least), pro-

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ceeded to a rapid and immense growth in numbers, wealth, and area of control over the surface of the globe. They transformed the whole material method of life in the process, and yet maintained complete stability throughout. This was the story of England for more than eighty years—a story which would be incredible if we came upon it as an isolated fact, for there is nothing comparable to it in all recorded history. That new and empty lands should be occupied and settled, with a corresponding increase in numbers and change in method, is a commonplace of history, but in this case it was a society with the deepest roots and by nature exceptionally conservative which so developed. The scale and the rapidity of the thing make it something without parallel: and, further, the accompaniment of the whole by increasing security and increasing moral unity, in spite of the prodigious external change, so powerfully affected the world that England's inventions on the material side, English institutions on the political, imposed themselves wherever the culture of Christendom and the white European races held, and later extended to an increasing part of the Pagan world. Railways and Parliaments became the marks of the English impress upon the globe in the nineteenth century (as the period is roughly called), and it may be repeated briefly but without inaccuracy that it was "the English Century." Those who lived in the atmosphere of this prodigious advance came, especially towards its close, to take it for granted—with a corresponding contempt for those other societies which had not enjoyed the same fortune. But to appreciate the scale of the thing we ought not thus to take it for granted, but to stand outside it, seeing it for what it was—the greatest expansion any state has known in such a brief period of time.

The thing had been launched long before the date of Waterloo; the population of Great Britain had already increased by more than half during the preceding century; the use of machinery for production, of steam and therefore also coal as the motive power of that machinery—these were beginning to be familiar to a generation of men who were elderly at the time of Waterloo: but it is only after Waterloo that the future becomes certain, and there is a common character in all that lies between the final defeat of Napoleon and the declaration of war against the republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

While this unexampled extension of English affairs proceeded

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there went coupled with it, though retarded and belonging rather to the later half, an apparent destruction of Ireland. For over thirty years the population, which had been one-half that of Great Britain, continued to rise, but not the wealth of the country with it; and before the mid-century was reached there fell the catastrophe of the Great Famine. An unknown number—at the very least a million and a quarter, but through indirect causes far more—actually died: the opportunity was taken to turn the people off their land and to drive them into forced emigration—and in wealth and numbers Ireland sinks until before the Boer War at the end of the century she has less than half the population she had had barely fifty years before.

Overseas, to some extent in Australasia but far more in the United States, the Irish prospered and rapidly increased; so that as a race and nation to-day they stand in a larger proportion to Great Britain than they did before the disaster, but within the mother-country of Ireland it was the native race which had been stricken, and the proportion of aliens, alien in tradition and temper, even anti-national in feeling, had become far greater than in the days when all political power had lain in their hands: a superficial observer might have believed at the end of the nineteenth century the current opinion expressed in England, that the Irish as a people were doomed to disappear.

**The Numerical Expansion.** Certain details of the numerical expansion of England, which is the most obvious mark of the period, will appear as we proceed from one step to another. But in this introduction it is sufficient to remark that in the lifetime of one man the population multiplied by four; the colonial expansion (including, of course, many Irish, Dutch, etc., not of English blood, though still politically subject to the English Crown) was from next to nothing to more than ten millions. Australasia, for instance, with 20,000 inhabitants in 1815, had in 1899 five million. Canada had under 100,000 in 1815, and six millions in 1899. South Africa (that part of it dependent upon the English Crown) had in 1815 30,000 whites and in 1899 300,000.

Or take iron. Since machinery is the note of all this, and the great bulk of machinery is made from iron, it is a test. The coefficient of expansion here is nearly thirty. Take coal, which with iron is the twin test. The expansion here must obviously be less than that of iron, for coal is not a manufactured product

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and was already being largely mined when the period began—but even coal multiplied by four. It is customary to take commerce as a basic test—that is, the total amount of exports from and imports into the island of Great Britain. The test is not so satisfactory as it is presumed to be; a nation may in reality be very poor, though doing a large amount of foreign trade, and it may certainly be well-to-do, though doing none, but as England was dependent upon this form of activity it is in connection with England a fair rough test. Now, the coefficient of expansion in trade between Waterloo and the Boer War is eleven or twelve. Further, such commerce was carried mainly in English ships, and financed and insured by English institutions, for the services of which the foreigner as well as the native paid tribute.

The expansion of wealth is a more difficult thing to appreciate. It may fairly be said, counting foreign investment, that the real wealth of the people of Great Britain—that is, the annual power of effective demand for goods and services—increased (taking the period as a whole) more rapidly than population. But the estimate is very complex, for the following reasons:

(1) There is in any estimate of national wealth an element of 'economic imaginaries'; that is, sums counted as part of the total natural wealth when in fact they are not so.<sup>1</sup> The simplest example of it is wealth being counted twice over: as, for instance, the income of a young man allowed him by his father and his father's total income, out of which it comes. But apart from such a crude example as this there are thousands of others. The proportion of economic imaginaries to real wealth increases with the commercial activity of a community—it was and is very large in the society of Great Britain.

(2) When wealth is ill-distributed, as it was in England during the nineteenth century, the test of incomes assessed for taxation is very misleading; but for such rough value as it has the increase in assessment is much more rapid than the increase in population.

A final example may be considered in the expansion of the railway. This typically English thing begins in 1825. In rather more than fifteen years you have a thousand miles of it within the island, but before the end of the century 20,000 miles.

**The Change in Method.** The material transformation of

<sup>1</sup> The term is formed on the model of mathematical 'imaginaries'—i.e., functions which have no real existence, such as the square root of minus one.

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life in Great Britain was as remarkable as the mere expansion in numbers and values. It was a change primarily dependent upon the use of machinery, accompanied by what is called 'urbanization'—that is, the changing of the people from a condition mainly agricultural to a society mainly composed of townsmen.

It is to be remarked that, although all material conditions react upon spiritual conditions, it is a mistake in the case of Great Britain during the nineteenth century—as in almost every other case—to make the material condition the cause and the spiritual condition the effect. So far was this from being the case that, though material conditions were thus utterly transformed, the change in the political and social habits of the English, and even in the general mood of her religion, only came quite late in the period, and not till the end of it had been pushed so far as to make the Englishman of 1900 markedly different from the Englishman of ninety years before.

The use of machinery had for its main effects a gradual concentration, which after the first third of the period became rapid, of people in factories. It further gave to those thus employed in great numbers precariously by capitalists (who used them as 'hands' for the working of machines that did not belong to the 'hands' themselves, but to their masters) a place in society which was not that of the poor man whom the beginnings of industrial capitalism had exploited. Work which had been done for a wage and by a proletarian, but at least in his home, was now done away from his home, and the domestic organization of society was changed.

Another effect of the increasing use of machinery, especially in the second half of the period, was the beginning of what was called 'standardization'—that is, a mechanical similarity in objects commonly used. More and more could man's common utensils and even his food be turned out cheaper under a pattern than by more scattered effort—and the cheaper thing ousted the dearer thing. The process has gone very much faster since 1900 than it had been going before, but it was already clearly apparent by the beginning of the period of which we speak.

The rate of urbanization—that is, the turning of England from a mainly agricultural society to a town society—was more rapid and more complete than the ordinary statistics show. In these, town populations are estimated by the population of certain centres arbitrarily called urban, but there are omitted

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the great districts which are really urban in their way of living and thinking—in water-supply, building, transport, and everything else—though still under the administration of rural authorities. Large districts outside the great industrial towns were just as urban as the industrial towns themselves, while many a cathedral or small market town continued to be part of the old agricultural civilization of England.

More, much more, rapid in pace and more extended in numbers than urbanization in the form of actual living under modern town conditions was the development of what may be called the urban mind. The typical agricultural Englishman, farmer or labourer, became so small a minority of the population that, in spite of the powerful tradition attaching to the land, he ceased to affect the fortunes of the country. The transformation in the means of transport, the rapidity and ease of communication, even while this was dependent upon steam, as it was at the end of the nineteenth century, made, of course, for the expansion of great towns.

The most characteristic change, however, in all this was the development of the popular Press. The newspaper became a totally different thing from what it had been—in numbers, in type of reader, in the effect it had upon the reader, and in the area which it covered. It was not until the very end of the period that this novel force began to tell, but when its effect came it came in full strength, and already before the close of the century the policy of two or three popular papers published simultaneously in different centres could affect the direction of the nation.

**Order and Continuity.** Yet, with all this, nineteenth-century Great Britain was not only the most orderly of the great European states, but the one in which order grew to be more and more the rule, until at last exception to it became unknown. This state of affairs was due in part to the effect of aristocracy—that is, government by a special class—but this in its turn depended upon national character. For, since aristocracy is from below, its strength consists in the acceptance of, and even demand for, upper-class government by the mass of the governed. In this the English, especially in the latter part of this period, formed an exception to all the rest of the world. It was this political character which gave unity to the nation, which gave continuity to its institutions—or, at any rate, to the names of them (a thing not without

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doctrine which it owed to the destruction of Catholicism at the end of the seventeenth century. When later (as we shall see) this tradition began to fail, the morals still endured—though weakening; but the doctrines were long continued, and the doctrines were those (with the consequent morals) of a Protestantism founded upon the English Bible. Combined with the unity of national feeling in this matter, the presence of various opinions and a mass of sects was insignificant. It seems a great matter to those who know of no other atmosphere, but to those who can look on it from outside, from the standpoint of the Catholic culture or from the standpoint of individual and convinced scepticism, unmixed with any personal experience of Protestantism, the truth is glaring. The moral unity of England which was maintained throughout the whole of this time, and was only beginning to be shaken towards the close of it, was as striking as her political unity. All around her was revolution, tumult, national and civil war: within her boundaries was security and peace due to this moral unity, which was intermixed with and indistinguishable from what has been called "Patriotism—the Religion of the English."

**Naval Supremacy.** But the security based upon internal order (and this in its turn based upon certain political and spiritual characteristics in the English people) could not have been maintained but for the invincibility of the state. It would not have been enough: and England would not have been secure within had she not been secure without. From "the Glorious First of June" (June 1, 1794) for a hundred and twenty years (until the outbreak of the Great War) the naval supremacy of England could not be disputed. France was the only state which could have been a serious rival in this field: the Revolution had destroyed the French naval traditions, and from that blow it never had time to recover; for, though there were brief periods in which the French navy became something of a rival, Continental war and its consequent expenses, political disturbances, etc., forbade a continuity of that rivalry.

The naval supremacy enjoyed by England was such that a phrase applied to it—not unjust but rhetorical—may be recalled: "The frontiers of England at war are the shores of the enemy." But this supremacy would have been of little service had it not been used in a certain special fashion—which is perhaps the best monument which the future historian will note to the political

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supremacy of the governing class in those years during which England was still politically aristocratic. Here was a force which could not only bombard coasts, land troops, or convoy allies whither it willed; could not only obtain new commercial concessions and make its trade routes secure beyond those of all other nations; but was also an instrument of war which, being invincible, might be used for coercion. Any individual Power lay open to the threat of English blockade, and against such blockade a Continental enemy could—as yet—do nothing.

Now, a position of that kind should inevitably have led to a coalition against those wielding so formidable a weapon. Yet no such coalition was ever provoked. It is not the least astonishing among the score of astonishing main things in the story of this 'English Nineteenth Century.' Till towards the end of the century the French were the only rival upon the sea, and never equal. England, free from the military expenses of a Continental Power, therefore able to concentrate upon her marine power, and having by this time a naval tradition without a rival, never permitted such strength to provoke reaction against her. From the disastrous consequences of a coalition against England in the nineteenth century no intensity of patriotic feeling within the island, no perfection of moral unity could have saved the country. By an exercise of political skill on the part of the English governing class unrivalled in the rest of the world, in each succeeding European situation the menace of an alliance against English sea-power was dispelled: a coalition never appeared.

Such was the summit reached by the end of Queen Victoria's reign and of the nineteenth century. An unmenaced future seemed wholly certain, and the supremacy of the country as assured as was its exceptional wealth and its complete security.

But there runs throughout the long business of these eighty-five years, even past their triumphant conclusion, the unanswered riddle set by the presence throughout the world of the Irish people and their religion.

## THE INITIAL STRAIN

**The Problems.** The end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 left England faced with a group of somewhat disconnected problems:

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(1) She had to mould as far as possible, or accept where moulding was beyond her powers, the new European settlement in such a way as would be most to her advantage. For it was clear that the frontiers of Europe would not be restored to what they had been before the French Revolution.

(2) She had after the settlement to follow a foreign policy which would prevent any Power or group of Powers from being strong enough to challenge her at sea.

(3) She had to deal with an Ireland which had been crushed and the treatment of which was wholly at variance with the whole of Western European feeling since the principles of nationality and the French Revolution had spread. In other words, she had to see to it that Ireland, though it would certainly be a material danger, should not be a moral danger. It was an Ireland then, be it remembered, the destruction of which had not yet been accomplished; which had a population of more than one-third of her own and rapidly rising to be half her own.

(4) Lastly she had to deal with a very heavy social strain at home, because the period was one of deflation, because a chief result of the war was exceedingly heavy taxation, because the poor—deprived of their land in the country and their economic independence in the new towns—had not yet acquired a habit of submission, and because the Industrial Revolution was making for class hatred.

There was therefore in these four aspects a period of bad strain ahead—and it was to come to a head in the group of years surrounding the year 1830. From the year 1828 onward to the year 1834 we find placed the main events which, if they did not end the strain to which England was subjected, at any rate introduced a new period in which the burden was not so great.

**The Settlement.** First, then, as to the European settlement. This, being made under the memory of the great French military victories, was necessarily anti-French, and indirectly favoured the Protestant as against the Catholic culture of Europe. Thus the Lower Rhineland, which has Cologne for its principal city and was one of the wealthiest of the German regions, though Catholic was handed over to Protestant Prussia: and this was the beginning of that modern expansion of Prussia which led her at last to dominate two-thirds of the German race and so to divide the Catholic Germans that throughout the century they continuously declined in political weight. Next door to Rhenish

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Prussia eastward were the Southern Netherlands—their upper class wholly French-speaking, half their populace French-speaking, and, though divided like all Catholic countries into clerical and anti-clerical, wholly of the Catholic culture. Here the solution was reached of reducing French power and at the same time preventing the coast and ports opposite England from falling into the hands of another Great Power by putting the southern and wholly Catholic provinces of the Netherlands, Belgium, under the Protestant Crown of The Hague—the monarchy of the house of Orange. The Tsar of Russia, a man of enthusiastic and generous temperament, envisaged the settlement under the light of what he erected as “the Holy Alliance”—consisting of the great military Powers of the Continent other than France: Austria, Prussia, and Russia. In theory the spirit of this alliance, which the three great allies desired England to join, was the service of Christendom, divided, it is true, into the three cultures of the Greek Church, Protestantism, and Catholicism, but united and desiring to maintain the old traditions of which the French Revolution was regarded as the enemy—hence the word ‘Holy.’ The bond between these three military Powers, the populations of which were so singularly different in character, was the dismembered and murdered body of Poland, which they had divided between them.

After the partition of Poland which Frederick of Prussia had cynically accomplished there still remained a fraction of independent Polish country when the French Revolution broke out, and it was during the French troubles, when there was no longer a French Government to help it, that the final dismemberment of Poland had taken place—Prussia, Russia, and Austria each seizing a portion. The Holy Alliance confirmed that crime. It also indirectly weakened the Catholic culture by restoring the old mosaic of separate small states in Italy, including, of course, the Papal States, with the exception of Venice, which, in memory of Napoleon’s first treaty, was handed over to Austria, as also was Lombardy.

**The Oceanic Settlements.** England, with Castlereagh as her Foreign Minister, had obtained her first desire, which was the prevention of the Netherlands falling into the hands of a Great Power—especially Antwerp and the Scheldt. She had also refused to join the Holy Alliance, because that combination of Powers, had there been no counter-weight to it, would have

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been capable in the long run of a coalition against her maritime supremacy. But there remained the question of the points on the eastern and western oceans which England held as the result of the fall of Napoleon and of her maritime supremacy during the wars. Great wisdom was shown in this settlement, in connection with which, as in connection with all that happened during this critical period, we must not consider individuals. Castlereagh and after him Canning were the men acting for the nation, but the spirit of all the governing class was much the same—the commercial interests and the banking interests, with the Bank of England at their head, were one with the landed aristocracy and all those various forces which were to govern England for a lifetime, and it was their general decision which produced the results arrived at. Such national forces acted instinctively rather than of set fashion, but they inspired all that was done.

Malta was kept and so was the Cape, the first to provide a naval base in the Mediterranean and the next to provide a naval base on the way to India. By taking the Cape England had taken over the government of the Dutch-speaking farmer population there: she also retained Ceylon (which had been Dutch before the wars) because it was a natural appanage to India, where English power had grown much greater as the effect of her sea-power during the fighting in Europe. Singapore was also kept as a post in the Straits of Malacca, which are the gate to the farther Orient and its trade, but—wisely again—Java and Sumatra were handed back to the Dutch. They would have been too big a mouthful, and they were too distant. The string of posts on the route and the increasing English domination of India were sufficient to ensure England for the future the lion's share of Asiatic trade.

**The Consequent Foreign Policy.** The foreign policy which followed upon these settlements was managed with similar wisdom, under the headship first of Castlereagh and, after the suicide of this much-hated man in 1822, by Canning. It was tested in two points: first when the Holy Alliance determined to restore the King of Spain, against whom a revolution had broken out; and also when contemporaneously it had to deal with the revolt of the Spanish colonies in Central and South America. On the first of these points England had not the power to prevent the French army, in execution of the plans

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of the Holy Alliance, from invading Spain and putting back the legitimate Bourbon King upon the throne. But England refused to move in line at the Congress of Verona which the Holy Alliance had convened and of which this French invasion of Spain was the outcome; she also manifested her power at sea by protecting Portugal from interference by the Spanish monarchy, for Portugal was already regarded as more or less a dependency of this country, and the port of Lisbon has been always at the service of a British fleet. In the matter of South America there was a direct trade interest which made England support with all her strength directly and indirectly the separation of the Spanish colonies from the mother country in Europe. Until they were set up as separate states the Crown of Spain could make laws confining their trade to Spain, or, at any rate, restricting British trade with them. Ever since Napoleon had put his brother upon the throne of Spain in 1808 England had envisaged and fostered the idea of these rebellions, nor was she less interested in them because the legitimate Spanish King had come back. English volunteers helped the war in South America, not always successfully, but of more service was the maritime help she gave, direct and indirect; it was English maritime power which prevented the reinforcement of the Spanish power in Spanish-speaking America, and it was the British mercantile marine which acted as a link between the scattered Spanish colonies, nearly all of which faced upon the sea, and had little connection by land.

**The Episode of George IV.** These years were also the occasion of a singular episode in the story of the English aristocratic Constitution, which may be called the Episode of George IV.

Prince George was the eldest son of George III, and had been made Regent when the latter had fallen into his long, last, and hopeless imbecility. But George IV was not a fool like his father—he was a highly cultivated man, bitterly disappointed and consoling himself with debauch, but knowing his own mind and chafing, as such a man must, against the impotence of a nominal monarch or regent in the face of a governing upper class. Against him, therefore, the upper class instinctively turned, and the middle and commercial classes—rapidly achieving greater power than they had had in the past, for their new fortunes were being accumulated at a great rate—joined heartily in their antagonism to the Regent. They were delighted

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to see a man like Castlereagh preventing the King from having his say in the European settlement, and putting the shadow of the monarchy back in its place; moreover, George IV's personal character offended their morals.

When George III died in 1820 the occasion for a final outburst of this feeling came. The Regent being now legitimate King, his determination to divorce his gross, vulgar, and promiscuous wife was to be carried out. George IV's real wife, the widow of Mr Fitzherbert, whom he had sincerely loved and married in his youth and from whom he had been forced to part on account of her religion (she was a Catholic), was still alive. Morally, therefore, his existing marriage with a Brunswick princess, whom he loathed, was not a marriage at all, save for those who conceive that an Act of Parliament can destroy the laws of God. When the King proposed to get rid of this woman on the grounds of her adultery pretty nearly all England rose up in her favour: the exceptions were the more conservative-minded of the governing upper class, the politicians who bore the label of Tory. The difference between them and their opposing team of similar official rank, who bore the name of Whig, has been ridiculously exaggerated—they were but two wings of the same instrument of aristocratic government. Still, there was a certain tradition of personal loyalty to the Crown, stronger in those who called themselves Tory than in those who called themselves Whig. The Queen, who had really no case, was treated as a martyr; an able lawyer called Brougham, who defended her before the House of Lords, built up his career upon the popularity thus acquired. And the remainder of George IV's reign (he did not die until 1830) was spent under the shadow of this general unpopularity, of which the ultimate root was that he was something of a challenge to the system of aristocratic government. Not only the King himself in person, but the monarchy as an institution suffered from this unpopularity, but that institution was known to be necessary for the continuance of the whole complex of English institutions—a nominal King made real aristocratic rule the easier.

**Ireland.** It was during these few years of George IV's occupancy of the throne—a throne without power—that the new phase of Irish action in the unceasing struggle between Ireland and England opens. That struggle was not appeased nor put an end to, as Pitt and the financial forces of the City had

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imagined it would be, by the Act of Union. But it will be remembered that coincidently with the Act of Union there had been conceived, rather half-heartedly, a policy of Catholic emancipation. The idea was that if you were to have this big, unnatural appendix tacked on to the body of Great Britain its drag upon Great Britain would be less if the main grievance—the forbidding of Catholics to sit in Parliament—were got rid of. Since the Irish Parliament had been destroyed, the Irish Members of Parliament must sit at Westminster; but whereas the old Protestant members in Ireland did have a certain national characteristic and stood (however imperfectly) for a nation—for we have seen how the beginnings of the Irish revolt against England were led by Protestants—now, at Westminster, they were nothing of the kind. Allay the Irish grievance that they could not have real representatives of their own at Westminster, and some part of the danger at least would be over. This drifting policy of Catholic emancipation, which few at heart in England greatly desired, for it was very unpopular with the mass of English Protestant feeling, concerned, of course, Ireland alone. The Catholics in England were politically negligible; they were a tiny handful, not a hundredth of the population, and timid at that.<sup>1</sup>

The personality which imposed victory by force was that of Daniel O'Connell. In 1828 came the memorable Clare election. Hitherto those of the Irish populace who possessed the suffrage had voted, though Catholic, by an overwhelming majority for the candidates of the great Protestant landlords. Daniel O'Connell had in the year 1823 captured the Catholic Union, and proposed to use it for the ending of this state of affairs. He stood as a candidate against a member of the "garrison," and was elected by an overwhelming vote. But though elected he could not sit in the British Parliament, because he was a Catholic. The right to do so was extorted by the threat of civil war: after all—it was argued—the granting of these rights to Irishmen could hardly affect England, where Catholicism was now too weak to count. Therefore in the next year the policy was accepted, and it became law in 1829. Daniel O'Connell took his seat at Westminster, and thenceforward proceeded to the next

<sup>1</sup> The dread of Catholicism had wholly died down in the presence of its now manifest impotence in Great Britain. The Gordon Riots were long past, and only remembered by old men

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step—an insistent demand for the repeal of the Union. The Clare election, therefore, and the threat of civil war that followed it, a civil war in which nothing but expense would have come to England, and still further difficulties in the holding of Ireland, were the beginning of that long series, extending to our own days, wherein it was discovered that nothing could be obtained for Ireland save by violence or the promise of violence.

**The Revolutionary Year (1830).** The restored Catholic and legitimate monarchy of France had governed with a mixture of old pre-Revolutionary social ideas and institutions and the memories which more than twenty years of war—in the main glorious and successful—had impressed upon the French people. It governed a nation remodelled on the Napoleonic plan, and with Napoleonic administration by prefects, etc., all the people of which felt themselves to be citizens, though a good half of them at least favoured the restoration of the national monarchy. The populace of the large towns and great numbers of those who had family traditions of Republicanism chafed, however, under the traditional rule of the Bourbons; but those who organized the unrest and profited by it were not the populace—though it was that which did the brief fighting which brought about the change. It was the French middle class and especially the upper middle class—the financiers, the lawyers, and the universities—who were the driving-power behind the French Revolution of 1830. They were in alliance with the organization of Freemasons, they leaned towards the anti-clerical spirit, and when Charles X, the last reigning brother of Louis XVI, had fled the son of that Duke of Orleans (cousin to the royal family who had stood a lifetime earlier for leanings towards the Revolution) was chosen King under the title of Louis Philippe. This successful revolt in Paris took place during three days of July of that year (1830), and it was of great effect in three ways.

First, it broke up the Holy Alliance, hitherto consisting of all the Continental Great Powers—Austria, France, Russia, and Prussia. This Paris revolt of 1830 had a great deal of nationalism in it, and the setting up of the new Liberal monarch, Louis Philippe, was actually a challenge to Austria, Russia, and Prussia—for it was felt that France as a member of the Holy Alliance had been made a victim, and that the Bourbons were the puppets of foreign arms.

Secondly, the rising in Paris prompted a corresponding

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uprising in Brussels. Here Clericals and Anti-clericals combined in defence of a common culture, and drove the Dutch garrison out of the capital of Belgium. All that part of the country, formerly the Spanish and Austrian Netherlands, which had refused to accept Calvinism was determined to be rid of the Dutch, who were soon reduced to no more than the citadel of Antwerp. But this emancipation of Catholic Belgium was a serious blow to England's general policy. There was a triple danger in it. It might lead to the choice of a French dynasty and, ultimately, to amalgamation with France, so that Antwerp and the Belgian shores opposite England would be in the hands of a Great Power—as they had been under Napoleon. Alternatively, the Holy Alliance, were it to interfere, might throw the whole weight of Prussia into Belgium to effect its desire of restoring the arrangements made by the treaty fifteen years before. In this case another Great Power, Prussia, would be holding Antwerp and the Belgian coasts. There remained a third possibility, distasteful to England and opposed to her policy, but the least of the three evils: the setting up of an independent Belgium under some local dynasty that should not be attached to any Great Power. The English Government, under Wellington and with Aberdeen for its Foreign Minister, was against accepting what had happened in any form; but England had not the military power to occupy Belgium and restore it to Dutch rule—had she attempted that France would certainly have moved. In the long-run England found herself on the side of the French in the matter, and, after a preliminary danger of a French prince being elected King of Belgium had been escaped, English ships co-operated with the French fleet in compelling the Dutch to give up the citadel of Antwerp, the siege of which lasted from October to December 1832.

**The Reform Bill.** The third effect of the French Revolution of 1830 was the bringing to a head and deciding of English constitutional reform. There had been for a lifetime increasing discontent, among the middle classes and the now expanding industrial towns, with the almost immemorial Parliamentary franchise of England. That franchise was based upon the forty-shilling freeholder. And the forty-shilling freeholder had meant in the Middle Ages, when Parliaments were first brought into this country from France, the mass of the yeomen and the squires above the yeomen—'forty-shilling' meaning then roughly

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a holding of about eighty acres. The reason that leaseholders did not vote was that Parliament originally met in order to grant supplies, and the direct grants were only assessed upon inheritable leases (which were freehold) or upon allodial land, which was what we should call to-day 'land owned out and out.' In practice this system meant that the onerous and expensive business of going all the way up to London to bargain with the King for special needs of his which demanded special grants would be taken up by local squires, called knights of the shire. But in time the great bulk of the House of Commons came to be made up not of these, but of members for the boroughs, some being towns of importance, others ordinary country market towns or small ports, others decayed towns which might be no more than villages—some even with hardly any inhabitants. When the great landowners had substituted themselves for the Crown after the Civil War of the seventeenth century the House of Commons became, with the House of Lords, one of their committees. Squires sat in it as members for the shires or nominated men of their class or hangers-on of their own for boroughs which they overshadowed. There were exceptions; the voting in boroughs was very various, but when the practice had grown up of having contested elections it was nearly always members of the governing class—with such dependants as they chose to favour—who were returned to the House of Commons.

The first great French Revolution, spreading the idea that a Parliament should be the mirror of the nation, had made this old state of affairs look anomalous. The possession of votes through the control of boroughs in the hands of rich men could not be squared with the idea that a representative Parliament should express the will of the nation. That unworkable idea was still in vogue because it had had such a very short trial. Even France had only known it in a most imperfect form for a very few years at the beginning of the Revolutionary effort. But though the experiment of representation had not been really tested, the idea survived, and powerfully affected a considerable body of Englishmen—certainly a majority of the wealthier class other than the landed interest. The new great capitalists of industry and banking asked themselves why the towns whence they had risen—now the sources of England's wealth and the seat of those manufactures which were becoming more and more

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the mainstay of her commerce—should have no representatives, while some ancient village which had been made a borough hundreds of years ago and was in the pocket of the local lord should, as a 'pocket borough,' send to Parliament two members of the landed magnate's choosing. The first railway of public importance was built, it must be remembered, in that same year 1830; it ran from Manchester to Liverpool.<sup>1</sup>

The demand for change in all this, for a better apportionment of seats and especially for the representation of the great industrial towns, for the giving of a vote, for instance, to a man with a substantial house in a country town, of which he was, under the present system, deprived—while a small cottager outside, being a freeholder, should have that privilege—and, in general, a demand of the well-to-do middle class, and particularly the great manufacturers, to share in the powers and privileges of the landed interest, was already running strong, when the Paris Revolution of 1830 clinched the affair.

It did so in two ways.

First of all, it happened to coincide with the death of the King. George IV died on June 26, 1830; his death necessitated a new Parliament, and that Parliament would be elected at a moment when the effect of the new French Revolution was running at full tide, for it must be remembered that the revolution in Paris was not unpopular with the well-to-do middle classes in this country: it was largely anti-Catholic, it was middle-class in origin, it had not given the mass of the people any real power (for instance, it had not founded a widely extended franchise), and it was not connected with a tax upon property, nor even with serious public disorder. At the same time, oddly enough, the enthusiasm of the middle class for being given their share in government roused sympathetic excitement in the working classes of the great industrial towns. They supported the pressure for what was called "Reform."

Therefore in the elections which were necessary at the beginning of a new reign the magnates who owned the votes, and such small proportion of the voters as acted independently, decided upon a policy of Reform. The delays, checks, and

<sup>1</sup> The original experiment of 1825, between Stockton and Darlington, carried but few passengers as an exception, and travelled slowly. It was this railway from Manchester to Liverpool in 1830 that began the system as we know it.

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negotiations between those who (like the Duke of Wellington) hated any change and those who saw the necessity for meeting the middle class with their new-found power, their control of the great towns, etc., are of little interest.

The essential point is that under the pressure of popular discontent, the outbreak of rioting, and a second election in 1831 (after the Peers had thrown out a first Reform Bill), the Bill to give final reform passed in a new Parliament: the King having accepted the policy of threatening the Peers with new creations if their House continued to resist. The royal signature was given to the Reform Bill on June 7, 1832. One hundred and forty proprietary boroughs ceased to exist, sixty such boroughs with two members were reduced to one member each, and the franchise was granted to householders of £10 a year or more (to exclude the mass of the nation—that is, the workmen in the towns and the agricultural labourers in the country). Many of the new great industrial towns were erected into boroughs, there was some rearrangement of the county votes, and the system was made so uniform that in the old exceptional places where there had been a very wide franchise (such as Preston) the mass of the people lost their votes.

Before concluding this section it is interesting to recall the sequence of dates. George IV's death fell on June 26, 1830—the event which necessitated the calling of a new Parliament. The Revolution in Paris broke out in the next month, July; the successful movement in Brussels against the Protestant Dutch domination arose in the next month again, August; on November 2 the new Parliament met, and the Government in the King's Speech declared itself against Belgian independence and also against Reform at home. The Government was beaten on November 15 by a vote in the Commons, the King sent for Lord Grey—and from that moment the policy of Reform went forward. But it would never have come to what it did save for the rioting and rick-burning, especially the tumult at Bristol, after the Peers had thrown out the first Reform Bill.

## THE REORGANIZATION (1832-48)

**The Main Lines.** The period between the Reform Bill in 1832 and the critical year 1848 may best be called "The Reorganization." The strain consequent upon monetary de-

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flation, increase of population without corresponding increase of wealth, the great difficulties of foreign policy after the Peace, had been relieved. The aristocratic temper and Constitution of the English people had stood the strain, and the crisis had been passed without too severe a shock. The continuity of institutions had been preserved; the inevitable process whereby the new mercantile fortunes should ally themselves with the old landed fortunes had been accepted by the latter, the populace had not broken in, and, indeed, whatever their sufferings, had not the political capacity or—in the case of the great bulk of them—the desire to do so. The next task was to reorganize institutions in order to meet the coming phase of expansion and social change.

Industrial capitalism had long been planted in England: it was to become in these sixteen years between 1832 and 1848 first the equal and then the somewhat predominant partner of agricultural capitalism. But both sections of national activity were now to be taken for granted as capitalist—that is, based upon a population dependent upon wages and controlled by the owners of capital. But capitalism cannot carry on without restraint and organization from above: under it the community must be subject to new, more stringent, and more numerous rules of conduct, with public powers to enforce them. This sounds like a paradox, because capitalism itself arises from the principle of free competition, under which the small man is eaten up by the great man, and its essence is the existence of free labour unprotected by guilds and therefore obtained very cheaply at a competitive wage. But it should be apparent to anyone who considers the situation that the old freedom of society, in which most men were owners, must break down in a society where most men are proletarian wage-slaves. For instance, in such a society there will always be a considerable margin of destitution. Even above this there will be a very large body of the population living precariously on an insufficient income doled out to it as wages at brief intervals (usually weekly intervals) by those who own the stocks of food, etc., upon which the people live. Further, industrial capitalism destroys the family, so that there is no provision for the aged or the very young, and in the competition for mere existence the proletarian might sink into worse than barbarism: even little children would be set to labour. But then if you allowed this sort of freedom to go on the

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capitalist organization itself would break down; as a measure of self-preservation, therefore, it must begin to organize society in a new fashion, and this is what England—or rather the English governing class—now proceeded to do.

The most important initial step was the formation in 1829 of the Metropolitan Police. The model was gradually copied in other centres until it became universal throughout the country: it soon sufficed to master the blind revolt of the proletarian against the conditions imposed upon him.

Another important step had already been taken earlier when the right of workmen to combine for the purpose of collective bargaining—that is, the right to form what was called a trade union—was first conceded. Hitherto such combinations had been treated as criminal conspiracies. In 1833 came also the beginning of the social laws interfering between owner and employer—that is, between capitalist and workman. It was only a very small initial step—the forbidding of child-labour below a certain age in most industries; but the really important point about it was the setting up of inspectors, officials who could thus see that freedom of contract was limited, and set the law in motion if the new regulations were broken. From that small seed has sprung the mass of bureaucracy controlling the whole capitalist proletariat system of our time. Fourteen years later, in 1847, during this same phase of reconstruction, came a law forbidding work in factories to continue more than ten hours for women and youths, a restriction to the freedom of contract which was in practice applicable to the whole of industry, because in most manufactures the processes could not be carried on by the adult men alone.

**The Poor Law of 1834.** The most salient and the most remarked points in these new organizations, though not perhaps the most fundamental change, was the new Poor Law under the Act of 1834. The old Poor Law of the sixteenth century which had come into existence upon the destruction of the guilds and the charitable Church organizations for dealing with destitution had been applied throughout the growth of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, and during the earlier growth of the agricultural proletariat in the seventeenth century. It was based upon the old domestic institutions of England, notably the parish. Each parish looked after those of its parishioners who, lacking assistance, would have died of famine and neglect

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—being dispossessed of property and failing, or unable, to obtain sufficient wages. Being administered by parishes (in the country small, familiar units) and by neighbours, the old Poor Law, though in the hands of the wealthy class—the local magistrates—followed the rules of Christian tradition. A Christian family was in peril of starvation—money must be provided for them to provide at least for their minimum needs. It had best be found by almsgiving, but when the destitution is widespread it can only be found by organized public action. When agricultural distress had become acute with the enclosures of the commons and the very high prices of food during the Napoleonic wars the Poor Law had still been administered upon the old principle, and had necessarily come into contact with the realities of capitalist exploitation. A man was getting so much a week in wages. He had a wife and five children too young to work. He got no more under the capitalist system of competitive wages than his brother who was unmarried. Naturally a domestic and parochial system of relief, if it finds that a man cannot support his family on a wage, supplements that wage, and sees to it that there is at least enough to keep the wife and children alive as well as the man.

But, under capitalism, if you supplement the wages of a poor man you are subsidizing the capitalist who employs him—there would be no end to such a process. In theory it might continue until the capitalist was paying zero wages and the whole burden of keeping labour alive fell upon the parish, while all the product of labour went to the owner of the land and of the agricultural implements, stores, etc.—a member of the capitalist class. At the same time relief in this form, under the old Christian traditions of maintaining family independence and providing human livelihood, weakened one of the mainsprings of capitalist action; for if men are to be made to work for the profit of others they must do so under the fear of some penalty following on refusal. A slave can be directly coerced, but a free man can be only indirectly coerced by the threat of starvation. But there is no such danger or threat if he knows that, in any case, the community will support him or make up deficiencies in what he receives.

All this made the old administration of the Poor Law unworkable, if England were to continue in the new highly productive and intense capitalist activity upon which she was now

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launched. The Poor Law of 1834 destroyed the parish unit and the domestic spirit of the old state of affairs. Its underlying principle was the gathering of many parishes together into what was called a 'union,' with only one institution, called the 'workhouse,' into which the destitute should be put and under its rules controlled by officials. That was the chief principle; and the second principle was that the conditions of life in a workhouse (which saw to it that a man and wife be kept separate, and which, indeed, was the contradiction of family life in every detail) should be harder than those obtainable even on the smallest wage outside. For were pauper conditions made easier than those on a small wage outside, men would not work for the small wage and would prefer the workhouse. On these two principles—(1) the destruction of the family and (2) imprisonment for those of the proletariat who did not work—the English Poor Law of 1834 was founded. Coupled with the newly organized police, it formed the framework of industrial and agricultural society throughout the last two-thirds of the nineteenth century—the lifetime in which England reached her summit of total wealth, expansion, and domination.

**The Repeal of the Corn Laws.** The next point of reorganization which the increase of industrial capitalism would demand must necessarily be an addition to the supplies of food to meet the necessities of the great and growing industrial towns. In other words, industrial capitalism must have cheap labour, at the expense of the profits of agricultural capitalism, which had hitherto been heavily protected, because all the traditions of the governing class had been agricultural, and because till the Great Change England had been in the main an agricultural country. But the conditions which made cheap food come quickly and made it inevitable were, oddly enough, not those of England herself but of Ireland.

The term 'Corn Laws' signifies those laws regulating the price and import of corn into this country. There was already taking place an economic change with which, as the Parliamentary figurehead thereof, the name of the millionaire Peel is connected. Tariffs on a great number of articles entering this country, which were really tariffs for revenue more than anything else, had been abolished, and an income-tax substituted for them: there had already been an income-tax during the Napoleonic wars, and it was revived in order to provide the

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income which the change in the import duties had abolished. It would seem all part of such a movement to render free the import of food which, with a rapidly rising population and that population becoming more and more in this country a population of town wage-earners, was essential in order to ensure the cheapness of subsistence; food already came largely from abroad and would continue to do so to an increasing extent. For if the population grew beyond a certain limit it would be impossible for this island to feed itself.

But, England having always been agricultural hitherto, and its great fortunes in the hands of landed proprietors, there was a strong tradition that wheat ought to be protected; until it rose above a certain price it must not be imported. Roughly the idea had been that it ought to be at least £2 a sack—8os. a quarter—which, considering the difference in the value of money between that time and this, was a very high price indeed.

Now, wheat is the pivot upon which all mixed farming turns. Upon dear wheat depended the high rents of the landlord and the high profits of the farmers, and in general what was called 'the prosperity of the countryside,' which most of its inhabitants, being no longer peasants but men working at a wage, were far from sharing. As the demand for free import of wheat grew more violent, the old standard of 8os. was lowered to 73s., and it was imagined that the situation might be dealt with on what was called a 'sliding scale.' If wheat fell below a certain point a duty was to be imposed which would bring its value within the country up to that price, and as the current price slid up and down so should the duty imposed slide up and down so that a high price and the steadiness thereof might be maintained.

To meet the increasing demand for cheap food for the towns the Anti-Corn Law League was founded, having behind it the great fortunes of the industrialists. It had the good luck to find in Richard Cobden exactly what it wanted in the way of an exponent. lucid in mind, eloquent in phrase, unwearying in exposition. The reform was inevitable, for the whole system of town industry made for it irresistibly, but it was resisted vainly during the early forties, and not even the bad wheat harvest of 1845 would have brought about the concession—what did that was the condition of Ireland.

The Irish potato crop was failing, it was impossible to refuse

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the importation of food, and in June 1846 the abolition of the Corn Laws began. But the great landed interests which still predominated in the government of England felt that they had been betrayed by the leaders of their own class in Parliament.

**The Good Fortune of the Throne.** This period of reorganization was facilitated by a piece of good fortune in connection with the Throne. When William IV died in 1837 there acceded his niece, the daughter of the Duke of Kent, a young woman in her eighteenth year, by name Victoria. She was of excellent reputation, possessed of a strong character, sufficiently well taught, but hitherto somewhat ignorant of the world. This change in the character of the occupant of the throne was of the highest advantage to England as the country had now come to be constituted, and how this was so it is important to understand.

For the proper working of that aristocratic policy in which England was so conspicuously different from all the rest of Europe it was necessary that there should be in name at least a monarchical centre—a Crown.

The old monarchy had been destroyed for good and all at the Revolution in 1688, and since then the gentry had allowed no King or Queen to govern. But the office was maintained not only in name and as a centre and symbol of national unity, but also with certain declining powers still attaching to it. What was more, on a very large number of points no definition had been given. One might say that in theory a King or Queen might do a number of things which in practice they were not allowed to do—for instance, give orders to the Army without consulting a minister. In other words, although in practice the remaining shadow of power in the monarchy had been reduced to next to nothing, there might on occasion be some anxiety among gentlemen lest it should revive. It was precisely during the great social strain, between Waterloo and the middle of the nineteenth century, when what I have called "The Reorganization" was developing, that the monarchical danger to aristocratic government might arise. For it is the business of a monarch who really rules to support the populace against the privileged classes, since a monarch stands for all men.

Now, the appearance in 1837 of a man of determined character, a legitimate King of the royal house (which had now been acknowledged from long before living memory, having been quite

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secure for nearly a hundred years), might have given English affairs a very different direction from that which they took. The new industrial state might well have suffered from popular convulsions and have been affected by the Irish and Continental examples of revolt by the poor against the rich. But with a Queen upon the throne, very young and of just such a quality as would be most admired by the mass of the people, and at the same time easily amenable to direction from those of the governing class who were about her, that peril was removed.

For the quite exceptional space of sixty-three years the monarchy was represented by a woman; she redeemed the isolation of the Throne in the midst of the upper class, and destroyed the unpopularity which it had with many of that class and through them with a large section of the people; before half her reign was over Queen Victoria had become, as it were, the incarnation of the English people, and for many years before her death was the idol of the nation.

**Summary of the Reorganization.** It was the middle of the century which saw the achievement of reorganization, the necessity of which the governing class had recognized in such timely fashion, not too late, during the first strain after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. It was not the end of the task, which had to continue, of course, indefinitely so long as industrial capitalism developed—a task still actively pursued by the society in which we live—a combination of loss of well-distributed property with order, and the regimentation of a proletariat which was becoming more and more identical with the bulk of the nation. But though the task was to continue indefinitely, it was these years, between the Reform Bill of 1832 and 1848–50, that the first and decisive step in reorganization was taken and that English society began to be transformed to suit the industrial town which was now its typical element, the industrial methods of product, their consequences in a vastly increased foreign trade, and all the rest of it. A whole group of changes, some of them accidental but most of them planned and all of them guided, corresponded to that phase of reorganization.

Thus, Negro slavery had been abolished in the West Indian dependencies, at the vast expense of twenty million pounds, the slave-owners being compensated at a rate which has been exaggeratedly estimated at double the value of their human

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goods, but was at any rate at least 50 per cent. above the price they would have fetched for a 'willing seller.' It was a very good example of the way in which the principles of the French Revolution, spreading throughout the modern world, could be adopted in practice and without shock after sufficient delay by the English governing class: for France, the originator of this idea, and the country in which the first declaration of the independence of the Negro had been enthusiastically made, was fifteen years behind England in the practical application of the theory.

It was also the period when communications were advanced in every fashion, when the first railways were built—there were 6000 miles of them before it was over—when trans-oceanic steam traffic was founded on a large scale, and—a matter of great importance and falling really into the same category—when for the first time a general use of the modern post-office began. Penny postage in 1840 was a revolutionary step, and there began with it the modern rise in the number of letters. In twenty years that number had multiplied by thirteen, in twenty more by twenty-six.

One may say that by the end of this period—the middle of the century, that is—the rapids had been shot, the phase of danger was over; and it is above all essential, if we are to understand modern England, to observe that, though the whole thing was done by the governing class which continued to be the director of the nation for the better part of another lifetime, and has not yet abdicated, yet the things that were done were not done by that class against popular demand. Even the most unpopular pieces of capitalist oppression were accepted, and the general run of change either roused no protest or was upon the whole approved. For what was at work was not only a particular social class which governed, but the aristocratic temper of the whole of the English people: that is, their attachment to government by a ruling class. Clarendon, who knew his fellow-Englishmen well, had most pregnantly said two hundred years before that the English love to leave great affairs to be managed by a few. Hence the sentence already quoted, "Patriotism—the Religion of the English." It was in a society already wholly united, not only by the aristocratic spirit but also by the power of patriotism, that the modern industrial state was remodelled and set upon its foundations.

The thing was accomplished in its main lines by the middle

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of the century. Reorganization was to continue steadily, of course, and without halt for the next half-century and on into our own time. As industrial capitalism turns from competition to monopoly and from monopoly to the Servile State, the wider grows the field over which the enregimentation of the proletariat and the authority of capitalist bureaucracy spreads.

But that other sharply contrasted peasant society of Ireland was to remain a permanent and increasing challenge to industrialized England; and the challenge was to gain an added strength through tragedy. For, at the moment when England by the repeal of the Corn Laws marked the victory of the machine and of the manufacturing town, the Irish Famine came.

## THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE

**Nature and Magnitude of the Event.** The Irish Famine was a thing of such importance in the history of the world that it should be called the central mark of the English nineteenth century, wherein it forms a turning-point.

In the history of English expansion, in particular of the nation's astonishing advance through the nineteenth century, the Irish Famine was the visible and invisible cause, negative and positive, of so many things that it may justly be called the capital event of the Victorian era. Its consequences are by no means exhausted; the more grave and lasting of them are increasing, and will continue to increase.

How is it that such an accident, attaching, apparently, to only one corner of Christendom, and that among the poorest and the most neglected, should have proved of such consequence? This will be seen in a moment, but we must begin with a recognition of its great meaning before following its story; for to regard it as an isolated event, a local one, or, still worse, to treat it (as most contemporaries did in England) as a mere relief from pressure, is not only to misunderstand it altogether, but to misunderstand the immediate past of England, her present—and, for that matter, her future.

**The Failure of Repeal.** When the Famine fell upon her Ireland was in a state of the highest political activity, and this was expressed in the person and through the eloquence of Daniel O'Connell. That activity took the form of a demand for the repeal of the Union.

Daniel O'Connell, having obtained Catholic Emancipation, proceeded to use the organized national forces of Ireland which he had aroused, and to make them support him in his demand for the repeal of the Act of Union. But that rapidly increasing and intensely patriotic population of Ireland was duped. When the Irish had obtained Catholic Emancipation Daniel O'Connell had foolishly accepted as part of the bargain the Parliamentary

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disenfranchisement of most in that minority among the Catholic Irish which had possessed the vote before 1829.

What the effect was on Ireland is best understood when we note that the numbers possessed of the vote fell from 200,000 to 26,000. An extension of the suffrage would have tamed or lessened political excitement in Ireland; so violent and sudden a diminution of it left everything to agitation and mass action. It was the disenfranchisement of that large minority in Ireland, hitherto possessed of the vote, which led to the monster meetings and the consequent anxiety of the English Government.

Daniel O'Connell had behind him the mass of the population; his Repeal Association was formed on the Catholic Association which had obtained Catholic Emancipation from the reluctant Protestant Government by a threat of violence. Now once more there came the great meetings in the Irish towns, and the threat to make a coalition of such into one monster demonstration. All the machinery was set going for obtaining from England a concession which could only be obtained by the threat of civil war.

But Daniel O'Connell was himself opposed now, as he had been opposed in the first movement, to so much as the risk of bloodshed. He suffered therefore the fate which all suffer who, desiring the end, do not desire the means. There was fixed for Sunday, October 8, 1843, a meeting at Clontarf, outside Dublin, to which perhaps a quarter of a million people would have come. The English Government forbade the meeting by a proclamation which appeared on all the walls. But it would have had little effect save for O'Connell's own action: he advised his people not to come, and not to threaten violence. They obeyed; but the consequence was that O'Connell lost the leadership of the Irish people; he was no longer "the Liberator." A much more important consequence was that English aristocratic opinion, much of which had been in favour of Catholic Emancipation but all of which was opposed to the repeal of the Union, regarded the affair as a trial of strength which had ended in a conclusive victory. It was taken for granted that in future nothing need be done to conciliate Irish opinion and that force would suffice—with the result that for a full lifetime that doctrine prevailed.

It was accepted with the greater certainty because following immediately upon the failure of the movement for repeal came

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the bleeding (as it seemed) of Ireland herself to death by the enormous catastrophe of the Great Famine.

**The Famine Itself.** In the year 1845 one of the most prominent English politicians heard that the potatoes in the Isle of Wight were failing, suffering from a new disease. He seems to have remembered a little later that the potato was the main nutriment to which the dispossessed Irish—that is, the vast majority of the Catholic population of Ireland—were reduced.

In the autumn of that year it was known that the potato blight had appeared in Wexford, and there was already a certain anxiety in England with regard to the future of affairs across St George's Channel. In the two next years, 1846 and 1847, the failure of the potato crop through disease became almost universal, and as the period proceeded things went from insufficiency to grave want, from grave want to actual famine, and deaths by starvation began.

Things came to a head in the year 1848, and though they got better afterwards, it was not until 1851 that the potato crop was normal again. In the interval this failure of what had been the main sustenance of the fearfully impoverished Catholic Irish peasantry had destroyed by famine, directly and indirectly, about one and a quarter millions of the Irish people.

It is important to observe that in cases of this kind exact estimates are impossible; general estimates must, in the nature of the case, differ widely. The figures I here give are those of the statistician Mulhall, who may justly be regarded as a standard authority. Even if there were no violent political passions engaged the mere fact that it is impossible to distinguish between various degrees of breakdown in the human body through under-feeding renders exactitude impossible. It has even been argued that the total number of deaths from famine was *only* half a million. Perhaps if we mean by deaths from famine complete collapse and the end of life from receiving no nourishment whatsoever, until the man, woman, or child dies after many days of such agony, that minimum figure might be literally true. Even so it is probably an underestimate. But it is futile to read history in such fashion. The large number of one and a quarter millions which is generally admitted includes deaths which can be traced to the insufficiency of food, accompanied often enough by disease. If we were to add

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later those who died because their constitutions were wrecked through the famine we should, of course, have a far higher number.

Following upon the death of so many myriads by starvation there came wholesale eviction among the remainder. The landlord class, known to the Irish as "the garrison," unable to receive their rents and therefore to pay the interest on their debts to the City of London, began to clear the land of people with the object of stocking it in some more profitable fashion. Within three years of the Famine one-quarter of the population had been turned out of doors; and the process was to continue until it had directly and indirectly affected three-quarters.

Partly from the effect of the Famine and the fear of its renewal, but more as a consequence of these evictions, the Irish people began to leave their country wholesale. They were the poorest of the poor, their constitutions already ruined by the calamity they had suffered; they poured across the Atlantic in vessels the profits of whose passage fell to the rising shipping of England, and it is worthy of remark that of those human cargoes 17 per cent. died before reaching America. The numbers that perished within the island of sheer starvation, or as a consequence of extreme insufficiency of nourishment, having been a million and a quarter (out of a total population of eight millions), the number who were stricken by disease and ruined in health by the scarcity being indefinitely larger, wholesale forced emigration being added to the rest, Ireland appeared to be bleeding to death. From that fatal year of 1848 to our own day, during the space of a very long lifetime, the vital forces of the country and its numbers declined; at first rapidly, and then, as exhaustion did its work, more slowly, until at least half the people had gone. Those of the Catholic peasantry who were left behind largely represented the least able and the most impoverished.

It must be clearly understood that the Irish Famine was not due to a lack of food. It was due to that impoverishment of the Irish race which had fallen upon them when their land was taken from them by force in the seventeenth century. There was plenty of food in Ireland; there was even export of food during the Famine itself: the failure of the potato crop destroyed only the food of the poorest, and had money been provided by

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a sufficient loan, or better still by a direct levy upon the whole resources of Great Britain, to furnish a minimum of purchasing power, the Irish could have been fed until the crisis was past.

Partly from false economic theory, partly from the errors inherent to all Governments which have no experience of the governed, more from an indifference to the fate of Ireland, more still from religious animosity, in some degree from an obscure feeling that the weakening of Ireland would always be the strengthening of England, the tragedy was allowed to go its way.

As an example of the spirit at work let it be noted that no relief was afforded to any family which cultivated as much as half an acre of land. There were thousands upon thousands who, merely to obtain food, were forced to give up their little farms. It was made a principle that such grossly insufficient relief funds as *were* raised should be raised upon Irish land and not made as a grant from the Imperial Treasury. Nor was the administration of these funds left in the hands of the Irish—it was given to commissioners appointed from England, working in the spirit of the new English Poor Law. The name best remembered as the author of such a policy is that of Lord John Russell, later Lord Russell, who happened to be the politician of the time. But the spirit in which he acted was not peculiar to himself: the *Times*, which is a fair representative of opinion among the governing class, envisaged a future in which “a Catholic Celt would be as rare on the banks of the Liffey as a Redman on the eastern seaboard of America.”

Before the first year of the Famine was over a quarter of the existing Irish population had disappeared: the greater part by death, the remainder by flight across the waters to Great Britain or to the United States. In the upshot the population fell in mere numbers—let alone in vitality and every form of national force—to one-half its original number. There had been eight million souls in Ireland as against sixteen million in England—there were, a lifetime later, some four million in Ireland as against over forty million in England. From an Ireland mainly Catholic, being in mere numerical weight half England, there remained an Ireland—with a much larger anti-Catholic minority in proportion to the whole—which had fallen to be only one-tenth of England.

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**The Main Consequences of the Famine.** The consequences of the Irish Famine, if we regard those that concern the history of England alone, may be put under seven heads, each of which will be seen to be of the very first moment. These are:

(1) As a secondary consequence of the Famine the Irish race as a whole increased very largely throughout the nineteenth century and was parent to, and connected with, a very large belt of population semi-Irish in descent and under Irish influence.

(2) Native Ireland—that is, the Irish race in its own land—was so maimed that men discuss to this day whether it can be restored to its original place in these islands.

(3) In various ways the Famine gravely affected directly and indirectly the relations between this country and others, notably America.

(4) A further indirect effect of the Irish Famine was the giving of full scope to the Irish political genius, which is of the highest order: it has everywhere been used against England since the Famine.

(5) Yet another effect was the gradual accumulation in the New World of reserves from which renewed Irish effort could be supported.

(6) Again, the Famine founded and established a small but active Catholic colony in Britain, which now constitutes the bulk of the Catholic body in England, Wales, and Scotland.

(7) It was as an ultimate consequence of the Irish Famine that the English Parliamentary system was reduced from the vigorous organ of government it had been in the mid-nineteenth century to what we have before us to-day.

I will deal with these points briefly in detail.

(1) *The Expansion of the Irish Race.* The evictions consequent upon the Famine spread the Irish race throughout the English-speaking world. Great numbers of them had passed to the various Catholic countries during the eighteenth century, as a consequence of the breach of the Treaty of Limerick. But those numbers were small compared with the total of the Irish people, and they were drawn largely from the educated classes, who were refused the right to follow professions or even, till lately, to own land in their own country. Their absence weakened the Irish nation, but did not cause it to expand abroad as a coherent body;

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they were merged in the Catholic nations where they could make a career. Hence the great Irish military names all over Europe.<sup>1</sup> But after the Famine all this changed.

The Irish in the new British colonies, notably in Australia, had a corporate life, accumulated wealth, and rapidly grew to be of increasing importance. The same is true of Canada. But the largest emigration of all was to the United States, and the Irish body there, in spite of a good deal of leakage natural during the pioneer days from the sparse settlement of the country, and natural later through the way in which the Irish lived as labourers in the large towns, became a very large coherent organization.

Here again an exact numerical estimate is difficult; the Irish element in a family may be introduced by only one ancestor, male or female, and yet influence the religion and culture and political traditions of most of the descendants. One method of estimating is to take the Catholic English-speaking population in the Dominions and the United States, but this gives no just estimate, for two reasons. First, there are to-day considerable elements, German, Polish, and Italian, which are of Catholic origin but not Irish. Secondly, the practising Catholic body in any generally Catholic culture is never more than a fraction: it may be a very large fraction, but it is often a minority, and it is never co-extensive with that culture. We continually find men and women in America who have never heard Mass in their lives, but who have preserved judgments upon England and Europe which show the Irish effect working in their family traditions. If the total expansion be set at twelve millions we are setting it very much too low; if (as is often done) we put it at twenty millions we may be putting it somewhat too high; but the latter estimate is much nearer the truth than the former.

Now, such an Irish body would never have arisen within the limits of Ireland. There are neither the resources nor the area for it.

(2) *The Maiming of Native Ireland.* As a result, direct and indirect, of the Famine native Ireland within the island which was the home of the Irish people was maimed, and, as was once thought, even mortally so. The native Irish language,

<sup>1</sup> The head of the O'Neills, the family with the longest and proudest lineage in Western Europe, is now a Portuguese and bears a Portuguese title, but with the ancient name.

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which had normally been diminishing somewhat under alien government, was given what might have been its death-blow, and what at any rate confined it as a matter of daily use to a very small fraction of the people. We are to-day the witness of an experiment to revive it on the result of which it is too early to attempt any conclusion. Equally important with, or perhaps more important than, this form of loss in national power was the new proportion of native to alien in religion and in the culture that springs from religion. Seven-eighths of those in Ireland were of the Catholic culture in religion before the Famine; the proportion to-day is more like two-thirds. So striking has been this reduction of the vital factors making for Irish survival in Ireland that the English mind, naturally concentrated upon the neighbouring country and less concerned with remote effects beyond the ocean, was persuaded that the Irish effort at survival, so long and with such difficulty maintained, had broken down with the latter part of the nineteenth century, and would never be revived. It was a grievous error.

(3) *The Political Effect upon England's Status Abroad.* The effect of the Famine and its consequences upon the moral status of England abroad and upon the relations of England with foreign countries has two aspects, one making for the advantage of this country and one against it.

What made against England in this respect was the shock civilization as a whole received upon hearing that a whole province of Christendom had been, as it were, exterminated. That such a thing as the Irish Famine could take place at all under modern conditions and under the government of a highly advanced European nation produced an enduring effect. But as against this the increasing power and prosperity of England for the whole long lifetime after the Famine has gone very far to counteract this impression. In the colonies, but far more in the United States, the large Irish body has, of course, acted as an anti-English influence.

In the colonies of England's second Empire, that which was developed during the later nineteenth century, the Irish antagonism to England has been of less serious effect; it has helped to increase by reaction the feeling of attachment to the Mother Country which is strong in the other English-speaking elements of those territories. But in the United States, where there was already a strong tradition of hostility to England in the mass of

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the people and in the general political tradition of the whole nation, the Irish, with their talent for political organization, their intensity of effort, and their ubiquity, counted for more in spiritual effect than in numbers. There was a time when, of all the immigration from beyond the Atlantic, Irish immigration had the greatest effect. This has been somewhat diminished by the arrival of so many other European elements to mix with what had been originally, apart from the Negro population and a small original Dutch element, mainly British in origin.

What the Famine and its effects have set up as a permanent factor in the relations between England and the United States is the fixing of an idea which the citizens of the United States have never been slow to accept—that England is tyrannical, and on that account odious to the American temper. It is the last accusation which anyone familiar with the internal spirit of the English would admit, but, acting upon a culture increasingly alien to England, the memories of the Irish Famine, the way in which it was met (or rather not met), the evictions, and all the rest, have had permanent effect across the Atlantic.

(4) *The Irish Political Genius.* The Irish people have shown in modern times—that is, since the seventeenth century—a very remarkable talent for political organization. Within their own country it was exercised with skill under a great handicap, but its chances were destroyed when the last organized army failed at the end of the seventeenth century and when the Treaty of Limerick, which had been wrested from the Dutch and English commanders, was broken by Parliament. Those who would have naturally led in the political combinations within Ireland itself either became exiles in order to have a career, or went over to the religion and culture of the occupying power. The emigrant Irish, though drawn almost entirely from the poorer parts of the community, showed, the moment they were under free conditions, this talent for political organization to which I allude. Its effect has greatly increased, and gives them more weight than even their considerable numbers would command.

(5) *Economic Effects.* The Famine and consequent emigration to Great Britain and the United States and the Dominions gradually built up for the first time since the confiscations under Oliver Cromwell an economic reserve for the Irish people maintaining their own religion and culture. They were to be found in all the liberal professions, the army and the law, medicine

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and the rest, in larger proportions during the second generation, and still larger during the third, than was proportionate to the numbers of their community. But this has not been true, upon the whole, of commerce. There are many and considerable names of Irish descent in the roll of moderate and great fortunes, American, colonial, and even English and Scottish, but not in proportion to the success which the same blood and traditions have obtained in the professions. The total effect, however, has been to give, whether from professional earnings or commercial profits, a large and, upon the whole, increasing economic reserve to the Irish race; which reserve can be and has been used in their political efforts, in the maintenance of the struggle in their own country, and in the various forms of propaganda by which funds are raised. The field within which the economic force works is limited, its total amount is small compared with the great economic forces of our time, but it is everywhere present, permanent, and active; and the contrast should be made, not so much between it and the very much greater economic forces outside, but rather between it and the original condition in which the native Irish had, one may say, no economic reserve at all.

(6) *The Catholic Culture in the English-speaking World.* The main factor in producing any culture is religion. The English culture had become the most united in the world through the unity of its religion. The one thing alien to that unity was the Catholic body. The anomaly of its presence, while Catholicism survived in considerable force throughout the seventeenth century, was strongly felt and led to the most violent movements of the time and finally to the virtual extinction of Catholicism in Britain.

The English culture overseas was in the same position before the Irish Famine. In what were originally the English Colonies of the North American seaboard and was now the United States the one Catholic exception of Maryland was culturally eliminated after the destruction of religious toleration under William III. The American population, which rose against England in the eighteenth century, was a population almost homogeneously Protestant.

But after the Famine all this changed. The change came not only in the English-speaking world beyond the seas, but within Great Britain itself. The Catholic body in England since the

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Irish Famine has grown to be a coherent and appreciable force. Numerically it is not very large—perhaps one-seventeenth or one-sixteenth of the total population of Great Britain—and it is debated whether it is increasing or not; probably the proportion of Catholics to the rest of the population in Britain is as stationary as it is small. But its existence is appreciable and it has its effect, whereas before the period of the Famine it was wholly negligible. It received the accession of very considerable native English personalities, especially in the first years after the action of John Henry Newman and, immediately afterwards, of Edward Manning, the two great English cardinals of the nineteenth century. But the backbone of it is Irish.

To exaggerate the effect of this Catholic body in Great Britain, small and mainly Irish, would be a very grave error; to treat it as negligible would be a graver error, for it has struck deep roots and has powerfully affected English thought.

(7) *The Effect of the Famine on English Internal Politics.* The effect of the Irish Famine on the internal politics of England is, so far as the history of England is concerned, the most important of all. It is twofold.

(a) The Famine put an end to the Irish revolutionary example, and thereby negatively increased the aristocratic forces of order in this country.

(b) The Irish Famine at long range, with its inheritance of antagonism to England, produced a political effect within England itself, transformed for the worse, and in great part destroyed in effective value, the House of Commons, which had been the heart of the English aristocratic system for over two hundred years.

First, then, as to the effect of the Irish Famine on English revolutionary feeling. It put an end to a certain motive force which was making for revolutionary, egalitarian, and what are sometimes loosely called 'democratic' ideas, a force which, had it increased, would have weakened the united aristocratic spirit whereby the power of England was being built up. Until the middle of the century the great mass meetings of the Irish inspired similar movements upon this side of the sea. The coming together of popular forces in this fashion, which we may regard as hardly native to the English temperament (and have become to-day alien to it), did have an effect more than a lifetime ago upon the discontented masses of the English poor during the

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earlier period of strain from 1815 to 1848. And it was after the effect of the Famine had been felt that this spirit, for which the bad names are 'subversive' or 'mob' and the good names 'love of freedom,' 'equality,' and the rest, disappeared. In its absence aristocratic organization, with its result in unity and order, had the field to itself. The Chartist movement, which had Irish elements in it, was the chief example of revolutionary feeling. It was so different from anything which Englishmen now feel native that it is almost forgotten, yet in its day it was of considerable effect. In the early days of the reign of Queen Victoria a powerful agitation arose (clear in the leaders, though confused in their followers) for the granting of a certain "People's Charter," of which the long-famous "Six Points" were manhood suffrage, abolition of the property qualification for Members of Parliament, payment of members, equal electoral districts, the secret ballot, and lastly that without which the rest would have been worth nothing (and even with it the whole was worth very little), annual Parliaments. In the year 1842 a monster petition was presented to Parliament which Parliament refused to hear: it occasioned great alarm in the governing class, especially in London, and the moment was memorable for a speech by Macaulay in which that great historian and typical patriot prophesied general anarchy and loot as inevitably following the enfranchisement of the working classes.

Then came the Famine; and when Chartism made yet another attempt at mass action (in 1848) the thing was a pitiful failure, and the revolutionary spirit, having lost its Irish leaven, was dead.

Secondly, there was the effect of the Irish Famine upon the English Parliamentary system. What form the traditions left by the Famine would have had but for the extension of the suffrage by the English Parliament we cannot say. At any rate, with the suffrage increased, and with the advent of the secret ballot, the opportunity for a united Irish party at Westminster, demanding political freedom for Ireland, had come. The genius of the Irish for political organization at once appeared. When a disciplined body of nationalist Irish representatives had been formed and was permanently established in the Imperial Parliament it somewhat rapidly destroyed the ancient character of that institution. This happened in two distinct ways. In the first

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place, by holding the balance between the two traditional English parties, which had been loosely organized and which only vaguely represented varying tendencies in the English governing class, a third, Irish, party found itself able to direct that play of majorities which tradition had made sacred at Westminster. As a result the party system, which had been an elastic thing, full of the aristocratic spirit, became infected with a mechanical discipline. Individual voting, which had been independent, speaking and debate which had used argument and persuasion, both became negligible; discussions lost their vitality, and at last the independent Member of Parliament came to be regarded as a sort of grotesque exception.

This alone might have destroyed the ancient character of the House of Commons, but the second effect produced by the Irish Party went far deeper. That party invented a tactic of deliberate obstruction, with the object of rendering all Parliamentary government impossible unless its demand for national independence were granted. To do this was to strike at the heart of the Parliamentary system. That system was compelled to defend itself, and could only do so by making new rules for its debates; in the place of the old freedom of discussion and the old full thrashing out of arguments there was substituted a limitation of time, the closure; and with these came the inevitable tendency—not only in men occupying Government places, but still more in their permanent officials—to take advantage of the absence of real debate, so that the great mass even of the most important points were never really discussed at all. On the rare occasions when real issues were partially discussed they were no longer voted upon with freedom but as by machinery.

Under such conditions Parliament necessarily lost its old meaning. The House of Commons could still at moments voice an overwhelming public feeling on some simple point. A general election could still (though rarely) indicate the trend of public opinion. But as a political organ life has gone out of the House of Commons. The institution, as a seat of government, is dead. Its death lies at the door of the Irish: of the Irish as they became after the Great Famine had done its work upon the Irish soul.

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ACHIEVEMENT (1848-50 TO 1870)

**The Mid-Victorian Phase.** The twenty years and rather more from the Irish Famine to the year 1870 stand, in spite of the Indian Mutiny, for the full success of England and the most English period in the great English advance of the nineteenth century. They were the heart of what we still call Victorian England, and they were spiritually the summit of its achievement, because although it had not nearly reached its maximum of growth in any direction, yet it then most enjoyed not only invincibility, security, and self-confidence, and other marks which it long continued to possess, but was full, as never before and never since, of the characteristics on which all this was based—government by gentlemen, purity of public life, the prestige of law, regular and unchecked advance in every direction—and in all this there had come, as yet, no admixture of alien or degraded things.

Remote historians will look back upon this mid-nineteenth century perhaps as men look back upon the middle of Louis XIV's reign or Augustan Rome. These years were the heart of that epoch in which all went well for England, in which her wealth, population, commerce, and domination, which had already so largely expanded since Waterloo, were to take not only a more rapid but a more well-founded growth. As those twenty years proceeded the sense of security increased, until at last Englishmen may be said to have forgotten the possibility of external peril or internal strain. The burden of Ireland seemed to have been removed at one blow by the Famine, the effect of the new inventions and the new machinery was working cumulatively for the advantage of this country beyond all others in Europe. In every form of adventure large or small (save in certain moments of friction with the United States) the nation emerged stronger than ever. Agriculture was flourishing, and the manufactures upon which the country now depended and

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the export trade which they fed grew astonishingly. What was equally important, English institutions, English thought, were now impressing themselves more than ever upon the general culture of Europe. It seemed to that generation as though there had come to their country a peculiar privilege denied to all others. Men felt that England led the world.

The traditions then founded have continued to our own time; but after 1870, as we shall see in the next section, things changed. Simultaneous and contradictory forces were progressively to alter during the last third of the nineteenth century the position of England in the world and the nature of her domestic institutions.

The change was not one of decline—England from 1870 to the end of the century continued the same triumphant increase in total wealth, in numbers, and in area of domination and self-confidence, enjoyed the same internal security, and her vital supremacy at sea was more unquestioned than ever. Those who had been her chief rivals, the French, fell under a shattering blow of defeat at the hands of Prussia, with which Power, as representing Protestant North Germany, England had been in sympathy and often in alliance for over a century and from which she had, as yet, nothing to fear. But during those thirty years, at the origin of which the defeat of France by Prussia had left England supreme, two sources of anxiety arose.

In the first place, certain political changes, which were either inevitable or so much in the spirit of the time that they could not be postponed, were transforming the social structure of English society (universal compulsory education, a wider suffrage, the ballot, etc.). England began to lose its old individualism and freedom, and with it also to lose (very slowly) the aristocratic spirit which had formed the country.

In the second place, the Irish problem, which might better be called the Irish ulcer, reappeared: the menace of it increased, and its gradual effect upon English institutions was to be felt more and more in the coming years. For, to repeat what runs like a thread through the whole of the English nineteenth century, the conflict between England and Ireland was a poison which this country had *not* successfully eliminated; in the latter nineteenth century the virulence of that poison and its effects increased.

The years round 1870 are therefore the turning-point, after

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which the advance and expansion of England continue triumphantly, but also after which the problems of England are changed, increase, and slowly begin to provoke anxiety.

**The Crimean War.** The first grave event in this period was the Crimean War. It was a conflict between England and France on the one side and the Russian Empire on the other, and from its first diplomatic origins to the conclusion of the peace covers the three years 1853-56, of which the years 1854 and 1855 are those of actual military operations.

At the first reading of the policy leading to this war there seems no explanation or co-ordinating principle in it, nor any apparent result. France and England had no common interests; neither country had a major cause of dissension with Russia; there was no military decision to be obtained, nor any clearly discernible result. But on a close understanding of the time both its causes and its effects are apparent.

The main cause of the Crimean War was the necessity under which the new French Imperial Government felt itself to be of confirming its power at home. The long-hesitating support which the English Government at last gave to the French was due to a growing anxiety lest the expansion of Russia should threaten the English hold upon India. But both these causes were concealed. The ostensible points of quarrel put forward were almost negative, and to see the real forces at work one has to stand back at a distance of many years. The years 1848 and 1849 had been years of popular movements all over Europe. The French, after the long middle-class domination under Louis Philippe, had revived their old political enthusiasm and set up a brief very Radical republic which, in the conflict of parties and the dread of chaos, turned, as these popular egalitarian movements necessarily do, into Cæsarism. The nephew of the great Napoleon became first the uncrowned head of this revolutionary republican France, and then, like his uncle, its Emperor, under the title of Napoleon III. For authority he referred to a popular vote, which was enormously in his favour, and proceeded to rule in military fashion and with that ideal of efficiency in administration which is at once the excuse and the aim of despotisms. Such a position required employment for the army, and glory for it; it also required the confirmation of the *régime* by victory abroad.

The opportunity chosen was the defence of the Turkish

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Empire against the Russian menace, and the objective chosen was the Russian military port and arsenal of Sebastopol, in the Crimea. It was doubtful whether England would lend herself to this adventure or no, for the French alone, aided by Turkey, might suffice to occupy the Russians and diminish their power. The opinion of those directing English affairs was divided, and when the decision was taken to enter the war as the ally of France a strong peace party continued to protest. A French alliance can never be popular in this country. The siege of Sebastopol opened in the October of 1854, and the town was in the hands of the allies in eleven months, during which strong popular feeling had been roused in England by the sufferings of the troops. Peace was signed on March 30, 1856. The Russian armies had remained intact, for Sebastopol had been evacuated, and no direct military result had been achieved.

Yet the international consequences were considerable: the example of a combination against Russia had appeared; France, with the support of England, had become for the moment the first military power of the Continent; and England, with the support of France, had prevented any Great Power appearing on the Eastern Mediterranean. The Russian fleet in the Black Sea was eliminated; the essential point of Constantinople had been kept from falling into the hands of a rival; and, most important of all, Russia, after such an experience, would long hesitate before renewing the designs she was suspected of entertaining against India, towards which (though separated by a wide tangle of mountains) her Asiatic power was expanding. Further, Napoleon III, who desired to set up ultimately an Italian kingdom as a counter-weight to Austria and the Germanic power north of the Alps, had brought into the war contingents from the kingdom of Savoy. Later, with French help, the house of Savoy, with its capital at Turin, extended its domination first over the Lombard Plain (with the exception of Venice, which remained Austrian), then over Tuscany, and at last over the whole Italian peninsula, with the exception of the Papal States in the centre. These last Napoleon III continued to protect until the pivot year 1870, when, among the other great changes of that date, his power was to disappear and a united Italy to emerge.

In this same treaty of peace England secured what was really an advantage (though many would deny that it was so)

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—to wit, the strict international definition of blockade. No blockade was to be recognized unless it was effectual, and privateering was outlawed. To have both those points accepted internationally was to confirm more strongly than ever the power England exercised at sea. It is true that the right of search over neutral vessels for cargo other than contraband of war was abandoned, but on balance the new arrangements were heavily in favour of this country.

**The Indian Mutiny.** Immediately following upon the Crimean War, and perhaps to some extent as a repercussion from it, there broke out a mutiny among the native troops in India. Unrest had been present among them for some time past; it became active on the issue of munitions (cartridges) of which the agitators believed (or pretended to believe) that they were greased with pig-fat—an abomination to the Mohammedans—and with the lard of cow's meat—a desecration to the Hindus. The issue was recalled in January 1857, but the mutinous feeling was not checked.

In May 1857 the native cavalry at Meerut mutinied, and the infantry joined them, fired on their officers, killed the English colonel of the regiment, and liberated certain mutineers who had been imprisoned. The mutiny reached Delhi, where the King, the descendant of the Great Mogul, countenanced it, and the garrison of which town joined it. Lastly Nana Sahib, heir to a great line of native princes who had been dispossessed during the expansion of the English power over India, was guilty of a massacre of Europeans, men, women, and children, at Cawnpore.

Intense excitement was roused in England by the news of these things, and especially by the Cawnpore massacre. The repression of the Mutiny was undertaken with vigour, unity, and success; it was supported by native military elements in that diversified sub-continent—the great mass of whose hundreds of millions of population stood apart from the struggle. The Rajahs of Gwalior and Indore gave help, and a decisive effect was produced by the support of the Sikhs, a military race recently brought under British administration. They played a conspicuous part in the actions which suppressed the Mutiny. But it was not finally crushed until the March of 1858, when Lucknow was taken. From that moment all serious danger was at an end. The cruelties of the revolt and its suppression, the

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unexpectedness of the whole event, the tenacity which the British had shown, their marching and fighting throughout an Indian summer, the completeness with which the upheaval was subdued—all these made of the episode a most vivid passage in the history of Victorian England, and a strong addition to the power and prestige of the country. The fact that, as a result of that incident, the last power of the East India Company in government came to an end, and that the Indian possessions were taken over as a whole under the authority of the Crown, emphasized the importance of the moment.

**The American Civil War.** England was indirectly affected by the next great international happening, one that was to be of high consequence to the future of our civilization—the civil war in the United States. Its origin and conduct do not concern our history, but its result does, and that fundamentally. Briefly, the struggle in America was one undertaken between the principle of central rule and the principle of federation. The United States had arisen as a federation of sovereign states, each the complete master of its own destinies and especially of its domestic constitution—social and political. The southern states, mainly English in blood, had something of an aristocratic tradition, and economically reposed upon slave-holding. In the northern states a typically industrial civilization, reposing upon free but proletarian labour, was arising, and was fed by immigration of all kinds from over the Atlantic—largely Irish. Acute differences had arisen between the Southern and the Northern group, in sentiment upon the morality of slave-holding (though this was never the real cause of the quarrel), and politically upon the control of the western territories, into which expansion was now becoming rapid through the development of railways. But the heart of the struggle lay between the federal and the national principle. The North stood for the cohesion of what they hoped would become, and what since has become, a national unit, of which the various states are but provinces. The South fought for the maintenance of state sovereignty, upon which the original Constitution had been based. The expansion of the American population and wealth had been so rapid, and it was so clear that in the future that expansion might spread indefinitely and so create a power rivalling or surpassing any European nation, that the opportunity of the civil war seemed favourable for intervention by Western Europe—that is, in

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practice, by England and France combined: for if either entered the lists alone, its rival would side with the enemy. Had England worked with France in the matter it is probable or certain that the South would have been supported, and in that case it would have been victorious at least in its claim to secede from the Union, and a united American culture might not have arisen or survived.

It was a close thing whether England would or would not adopt the policy of intervention—the Government permitted the fitting out of Southern privateers in English ports, notably that famous ship the *Alabama*; and it is believed (it is probably true) that the Cabinet had decided to intervene. But not only the court, and in particular Prince Albert (for what small weight that factor was worth), but very considerable religious forces were in sympathy with the Puritan North, and—more important—commercial forces, coupled with general Liberal opinion, and these prevailed. It is said that the indiscretion of a member of the Cabinet (Gladstone) in a certain speech at Newcastle in the early days of the struggle (1862), which betrayed the fact that the Cabinet intended to recognize the South, precipitated the issue: at any rate, after that speech the proposal for intervention failed. It would have had to be conducted secretly and rapidly if at all, and, those conditions having become impossible, it could not be carried out. The country was against it, and most of the moneyed interest, including the manufacturing North, and, more vaguely, the evangelical in religion.

The main fighting of the American Civil War was over by 1865 (surrender of Lee at Richmond), and England henceforward accepted the new power of the United States as one with which she must at all costs and under all conditions remain friendly. From that policy this country has never swerved; it has been maintained through moments of the highest tension, and has governed all our transatlantic relations from that day to this. The advantage of so singular a position has been that we can create in the non-English-speaking world of the Continent an impression, not yet dissipated, that the United States stand behind us in any threatened disaster; that there is, morally at least, if not technically, an "Anglo-Saxon block." This idea the ultimate entry of the United States into the Great War emphasized. The disadvantages of such a position are obvious. They are those that handicap any man or nation

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announcing that they will accede to any demand, and suffer meekly any rebuff, from another.

**The Second Reform Bill.** In a general view of the fortunes of England during the nineteenth century the distinction between the various personalities within such of the governing class as chose to enter public life is unimportant. Whether Peel or Aberdeen or Palmerston or, later, Gladstone was personally responsible for this or that is of very little moment; the thing would be done in any case, the policy was that of a large and ubiquitous corporation—the governing class—conducting the nation from one increase of wealth and power to another with almost unfailing political instinct.

In the common type of that class there was one exception, and that exception was the strange personality of Benjamin Israel, whose grandfather had adopted the more theatrical style of 'D'Israeli.' Disraeli was not a practising Jew (his father had caused him to be baptized in youth), but he was very proud of his Jewish blood and had an unbounded admiration for the race of which he was a really distinguished member. Further, he showed the characteristics of that race in an acute intelligence and in a self-respecting devotion to the service he had undertaken. He had entered English public life, and though there was nothing of the Englishman about him, though his presence in it was the presence of an alien far more than would have been the case with a Frenchman, German, or Italian unable to speak English, yet he consistently served what he conceived to be the destinies of England, and what was more, in his view of these, even where they were tinged with theatrical exaggeration, a strong and increasing body of Englishmen came to agree with him.

His capacity for playing the game of politics was first seen at the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws, when he began to rally the support of popular Toryism to oppose the growing Liberal feeling which was the motive force behind the Free Trade movement, the demand for an extension of the suffrage, for popular education, and all the rest of it. Disraeli's accomplished power to manipulate the material which lay ready to his hand was best seen in the Second Reform Bill, that of 1867. The demand for increased Reform was naturally in the hands of the opposite group of men from those whom Disraeli was coming to lead—it was in the hands of the inheritors of the old Whigs, the forefathers of the later Liberals. But, their efforts having failed in

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the presence of opposition, Disraeli showed both the skill and the audacity required to attach its purely professional advantages to his own group of politicians, and to make the law in the teeth of all the instincts of those for whom he had hitherto spoken. The earlier suggestions of Reform, though fathered by Liberal opinion, would not have created the artisan vote; Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons put through a Bill which became law on August 16, 1867.

One may say that from this moment the later party system, with its manipulation of great bodies of votes and its gradual elimination of considered and free opinion, became possible. Under the new Reform Bill not only householders but lodgers in the Parliamentary boroughs could vote. We cannot understand the immediate past of the country unless we grasp the fact that there was no popular demand for any such extension of voting power among the people, nor had it or could it have for a long time to come any effect upon the aristocratic quality of English government. The new votes of the populace in the towns could be used, as a rule, only to support this or that member of the gentry against this or that other member of the gentry—this or that squire or younger son or lawyer or merchant against some one else of exactly the same kind. But though the initiative for the change did not come from those who might be said to benefit by it (if the power to vote—not upon direct issues, but at second hand—be a benefit), two negative effects would and did necessarily appear in time. The first was the difficulty (which became later the impossibility) to adopt a fiscal policy which clearly ran counter to the daily economic experience of the people—it was this which many years later made it impossible to organize a tariff including foodstuffs for the advantage of the British dominions beyond the seas. The second and unforeseen result of this sudden and very great extension of the urban suffrage was what has since been called the 'swing of the pendulum,' on the working of which the later party system, with its real (though unacknowledged) rotation of salaries, contracts, and other perquisites among the politicians, was based. Since the masses always have a grievance, in that they are poorer than their social superiors, the political action of those superiors will, in any specific matter, tend to produce a protest. A new tax or regulation or what not makes the existing majority in Parliament unpopular, and at the end of

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the term for which the Parliament is summoned—that is, if it runs for its full term, or at an earlier dissolution if it does not—there will tend to be an expression of popular resentment against the regulations most recently imposed. It will be but a slight movement one way or the other, the numbers of voters permanently organized in the two camps being more or less equal, but the margin of those who are ready to change will determine the issue: so the politicians can separate into two more or less equal bodies, each of which will alternately enjoy the rewards of the game in money and notoriety.

**The Numerical Advance.** Meanwhile side by side with the important international events, and the less important movements in domestic politics, the whole country during these twenty years was advancing in all material directions. From less than 18 million souls in Great Britain at the fall of the Irish Famine the country could count over 25 million at the end of the twenty-two years. The railway mileage advanced from an original 6000 to over 15,000; the movement of passengers advanced from under 80 million to over 360 million. Building on a larger and larger extent was continuous; more than a million new houses were added, and the standard of housing rose as well as the numbers. The millions assessed for income-tax rose from somewhat over 270 to not far short of 450, and, in spite of the rapid increase of population, the assessment divided by the number of inhabitants rose in the proportion of 10 to 14. The total trade, imports and exports combined, rose in the proportion of 27 to 48; the seaborne tonnage carried rose in the large vessels and the increasing use of steam from 14 millions to over 40 millions. The cotton industry dealt at the end of the period with more than double the amount of material it had dealt with at the beginning; the woollen textile industry increased in nearly the same proportion; jute, a new experiment, leaped up in the ratio of 42 to over 300. The textile industry as a whole grew from four to five times faster than did even the rapidly increasing population. And the list might be almost indefinitely extended in almost any direction, to cover almost any category of material action; even agriculture, which to-day we associate with a decline corresponding to the advance of industrial capitalism, increased its total production. The extension of the banking system, which cannot be quoted as an example of increased wealth, but is a

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test of the transformation through which the nation was passing, was in the proportion of 10 to 25.

But perhaps the most striking test of the financial security which accompanied so great a material advance was the steadiness of the national credit. In the first half of the twenty years the price of Consols averaged 95, and this within limits of fluctuation of less than 17 per cent.; while in the second half of all this security—that is, from 1860 to 1870—the average price was 92 and the fluctuation barely 12 per cent.—96 at the highest to 84 at the lowest.

The National Debt was very slightly more at the end of the period than it had been at the beginning, but its ratio to the extended total wealth of England fell from 16 to 11.

The whole thing was like a river which has achieved in its middle course a steady stream threatening neither flood nor fall, increasing in depth and volume of water with regularity and promising an indefinite future of similar ordered development.

### THE CHANGE: IRELAND REAPPEARS (1870-85)

**Nature of the Fifteen Years.** Four departments of English activity, apart from the continued expansion in wealth, numbers, and general power, affect this period. These are *foreign affairs, the New World, the breakdown of English agriculture, and—far more important than any other point—the reappearance with increasing weight of Ireland.* To these four may be added the first stirrings of a fifth, which also has vital importance and was to prove in the future the most important of all—a *change in the national religion.* But of this change in the last years of the nineteenth century only the beginnings were apparent.

**The Reappearance of Ireland.** Since a right reading of English history in the nineteenth century turns upon the relations between the English and the Irish peoples, the reappearance of Ireland in the field after 1870 is of the very first moment. We must grasp the fact that in the preceding period, for the twenty years after the Famine, it seemed that Ireland had dropped out and that the Irish problem, which had once seemed mortal for this country, would no longer count. But after 1870 a number of things converged to bring it up again in a far more acute form than it had yet assumed. There had been

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two or three years before that a certain number of sporadic outbreaks due to the activity of two extreme Nationalist secret associations, both of them working from America, the one best known over here being the Fenian—a title taken from one of the legendary heroes of ancient Ireland.

These forms of 'direct action' took the shape of attacks by dynamite upon public buildings in Ireland, such as barracks, murder, and attempted murder. But they were sporadic, they had not the support of the Irish people as a whole, and they were strongly denounced by the clergy. They were, indeed, rather designed to cause general ill-ease than to affect any definite and planned purpose, and their most prominent incident was the incident known as that of "the Manchester Martyrs," when three young men were put to death in connection with the release of Fenians in Manchester, in the rescue of whom a policeman had been killed. There was also an attack by gunpowder on Clerkenwell Prison.

But such isolated attacks of violence, though they reminded English opinion again that the Irish problem existed, could lead to little. There was, indeed, a disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1869 and the disendowment thereof, but it did no more than touch the fringe of the problem. More important in principle, though hardly in practice, was the first Land Bill (dating from February 1870), which recognized outside Ulster the principle of security of tenure and brought in the idea of dual ownership—that is, the vesting in the tenant of some small part of the competitive rent which he paid for the land taken by force from his ancestors. What is to be remembered is that from this day onward Irish political demands, so far from being placated by economic advantages, increased, and every effort made on the English side to relieve the strain by concession other than the admission of national freedom, only accentuated the demand for independence.

The extension of the suffrage and the Ballot Act, coupled later with the distress occasioned by the fall in agricultural prices, were the forces which combined to launch a wholly new form of attack. Ireland was to act henceforward in the heart of England and English public life through Parliament, and that not on the old lines of Daniel O'Connell but in a novel and far more effective fashion.

An Irish Protestant, one of the gentry and a Member of

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Parliament, one Isaac Butt, devised a demand other than the old demand for the repeal of the Union. He acted in flank instead of in front. Self-governing colonies, which were now an accepted factor in the British scheme, had made it possible to suggest the autonomy of Ireland under another form, to which Butt gave the name of Home Rule. It was no longer to be a question, as in the old days, of two independent kingdoms side by side, England and Ireland, both under one Crown (the word 'Empire' was not yet popular), but of Ireland's being given a Parliament of her own, such as had already been set up, for instance, in Canada. Matters concerning the whole of what was later commonly to be called the Empire were to remain under the Parliament at Westminster, but all Irish affairs should depend upon a popularly elected Parliament sitting in Dublin. The effect of the extended franchise and the ballot between them had been to send to Westminster so many members for Ireland in support of those ideas that they formed more than half the total Irish representation in the British Parliament.

Among these was a young man whose character lent the new movement everything it needed—discipline, unity, a clear aim, and consistent method. This man was Charles Stewart Parnell. He was of pure English descent on his father's side, a Protestant and a landlord, formed by an English education (at Cambridge); but his mother was an Irish-American who had trained him in an implacable hostility to England. He was elected for County Meath at the age of twenty-nine, in the year 1876, and rapidly became the leader of the whole movement. The method devised by him and supported by another Irish Protestant of great energy, Biggar, was that of rendering the old Parliamentary system of government in England impossible until the Irish national claims should have been met. The Nationalist Party, which soon came to have the support of all Ireland except the anti-national Orange group, and which numbered over seventy members, were bound together under Parnell in a rigid and most effective fashion: they were pledged to the simple programme of national self-government, and they arranged to use the rules of the House of Commons in such a fashion as to make that assembly futile—that is, for breaking down its old free method of working, through which alone it could have dignity or be effective. To meet the most dangerous form of attack upon them, which would be bribery, each member

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solemnly engaged himself not to accept any office of emolument at the hands of the English Government. Armed in this triple fashion, the attack was launched, and shortly afterwards was supported by a most effective economic weapon within Ireland itself—the Land League.

The Land League, the activity of which dates from the autumn of 1879, worked on the principle which had inspired the trade unions of England—combination for the purposes of securing a larger share of the economic product of labour. Its principle was to refuse rent until the demands of the tenant were granted, and a further effective weapon was devised, which came to be known (from the name of its first victim) as the 'boycott.' This was a social excommunication, whereby any man who had yielded, and thus broken the ranks, or any man among the enemy class who was picked out for special hostility, was refused all intercourse.

The struggle was to be kept up long beyond the end of the century, even up to and through the Great War—that is, for the better part of a lifetime: more than forty years. During the whole of that period, until the rebellion of 1921, the demand for Irish Home Rule continued and was never granted. But in the course of the struggle step by step Irish land was transferred to the tenantry, and most of the work of Oliver Cromwell was undone. But the most only. Even at the end of the process the tenant was still paying for the land which had been taken from his forbears between 1600 and 1700: he was still paying for it, but it had become his own. Local liberties of every kind had also been admitted, the only thing kept back was national self-government—Home Rule; and by far the major result of the whole business, in so far as the story of England is concerned, was the destruction of the moral value of the House of Commons.

That organ, which had been the symbol and centre of English aristocratic rule for more than two centuries, was radically emasculated. The way in which the calculated action of the Irish achieved this result was twofold: balancing and obstructing. The body of Irish Nationalist members (which rose at last to be over eighty) would throw their weight upon the side of one or other of the two parties in English politics (which had by this time become more or less fixed and crystallized); they would take advantage of the solemn and sacred game played at Westminster, and turn out a Government whenever the majority of English,

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Scottish, and Welsh members supporting that Government had not a sufficient majority over their opponents to outweigh those opponents plus the Irish vote.

As English politics were arranged for a succession in office between the two parties, this threat by an alien body to upset the working of the rotating machine was very grave. The danger would have been eliminated, of course, by getting rid of the party system, but the thing was too deeply ingrained in English habits to be disposed of; it was the vitality of the party system, the sincerity with which it was accepted by the rank and file of the English voters and the activity with which it was conducted by their leaders, that gave the Nationalist group under Parnell their opportunity.

At first the danger at Westminster and the active menace within Ireland itself was made by force alone. But even during this phase England, in her new relations with the United States, was disturbed to see what a great effect the Irish millions in that country were having. Parnell visited America in 1879, addressed the House of Representatives, spoke to great meetings, and made at Cincinnati the famous pronouncement, "None of us . . . will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England."✓

In 1881 Parnell was arrested and thrown into Kilmainham Gaol. Mr Forster, the Quaker who had sponsored (and sincerely believed in) the new movement for compulsory and universal education in his own country, had been given the department of Ireland in the English Ministry. His remedy against the sporadic popular Irish revolt was coercion—the keeping down of the Irish people by force. And he was the more attracted to this solution by the violent agitation which the arrest and imprisonment of the national leader had aroused. But already the effect of the obstructive weapon at Westminster was being felt. An effort to modify Parnell's attitude was made, and there was struck with him in his prison what was called the Kilmainham Treaty: coercion was to be more mildly applied, and Parnell in return would support the Liberal Party pending certain further negotiations. Forster, the passionate believer in physical force for the repression of the Irish, resigned, and in his place was sent Lord Frederick Cavendish, the son of the Duke of Devonshire, a member of one of the very wealthiest of the English families dating from the Reformation. On May 6 of that same year

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(1882), just after he had landed in Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish and the Permanent Under-secretary, T. H. Burke, were murdered by extremists in Phoenix Park, Dublin.

The social and political position of the chief victim profoundly affected English opinion, and there was passed the Prevention of Crimes Act, which put Ireland under a form of government equivalent to what is called on the Continent 'a state of siege.' Any public assembly could be forbidden, ubiquitous search into private houses was permitted, and where there was any doubt of the verdict demanded by the authorities a jury was dispensed with. Compensation for murder or other outrage was to be levied on the locality where the crime took place. Thenceforward for forty years Ireland was governed in such fashion, and this original Crimes Act gave its tone to all Irish government.

In the summer of 1885, under a Tory Government, advances were made to the Irish Nationalists. Lord Carnarvon, the new Viceroy, sincerely supported the policy of conciliation, and upon the strength of it held a secret interview with Parnell in London. When the elections came in the winter, under a franchise so extended as to be now almost universal, the whole of Catholic Ireland voted Nationalist by overwhelming majorities: even Liberal members could only be returned in parts of Ulster. The expression of Nationalist opinion was so strong that no Unionist member had a chance again outside the anti-national section of the north-eastern counties, and the anomalous university vote.

It was now clear that the large Irish representation of over eighty members could normally hold the balance between the two English parties, but even in such a crisis the party system was thought worth preserving. The numbers in the new House were 335 Liberals under Gladstone, 249 Conservatives, and 86 Irish Nationalists. There could be no secure Liberal Government against a combination of the Conservatives and the Nationalists, as their numbers would be exactly equal. An effort at a Coalition Government failed, and Gladstone, as leader of the Liberals, published on December 17 his adhesion to a policy of Home Rule, letting the news come out indirectly through the newspapers. But a number of his followers, including the important Lord Hartington, brother of the murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish and heir to the Duke of Devonshire, dissented.

The Phoenix Park murders, coupled with the overwhelming

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vote in Ireland on the new suffrage, had powerfully affected the English politicians in two opposite ways; it had made them consider the acceptance of Home Rule (both parties had considered it) as an alternative to the continuance of active, armed, and relentless Irish attack; on the other hand, it had embittered and strengthened English resistance to the Irish demands. In early 1886 Gladstone, in spite of the fact that sixteen of his followers had deserted him, obtained a majority of seventy-nine with the aid of the Irish, and in that same year the first Home Rule Bill was introduced close on the anniversary of the Phoenix Park murders. This proposal was followed by a general revolt of those among the Liberals who were most openly opposed to it—for it must be remembered that many who gave lip service to it were at heart hostile. So large was the number of open dissidents that the Home Rule Bill was beaten, a new election was held in which passion ran very high, and the Unionists (as the Conservatives now came to be called) took office under the leadership of Lord Salisbury.

**Foreign Affairs. The Elimination of France.** For two hundred years France had been the great rival of England, the head of the opposing culture in Europe and the only Power which could at first equal, and later threaten to equal, England at sea. For more than a hundred years England had acted against that rival—though intermittently—with the aid of the rising power of Prussia. Now, at the end of the last phase, which I have called "Achievement," at the end of those twenty years between the Irish Famine and 1870, the organized military power of Prussia did two things in succession which transformed the international affairs of Europe. Both these things were done by the diplomatic genius of a man who in all modern European history has only Richelieu for a rival—Otto von Bismarck.

At the beginning of the Prussian successes he had taken by force certain Danish territories, and it was remarked that the English Government, after using a threatening attitude, gave way. But immediately afterwards he proceeded to something much greater—the Prussian armies were victorious over the forces of the Emperor of Austria, Vienna ceased to be the traditional head of the various German peoples, and Bismarck carefully confined his victory to the exclusion of Austria from German affairs. Partly through his skill, but more through the blunder of the French Government, the French did not take

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sufficient alarm. Four years after the crushing of Austria Bismarck proceeded, with the aid of forgery, to provoke a war with France. In this war the Prussian armies achieved a sudden and startling success, comparable to those of the young Napoleon. Within three weeks of the first shot the French army had disappeared, half of it shut up in Metz and awaiting surrender, the other half surrounded and captured at Sedan. Paris was besieged and taken, and Bismarck in the Palace of Versailles inaugurated a new German Empire, to take the place of the old Austrian headship of the Germans.

This new German Empire was carefully calculated to be, in effect, Prussia; Bismarck worked at will the lunatic King of Bavaria, and thus included a large minority of Catholic Germany under the rule of Berlin and split the Catholic forces of the Germans in half—for he still excluded Austria from his scheme. At the same time he was careful to leave large local liberties to the mosaic of small German states, Catholic and Protestant, which Prussia now overshadowed; his new "Reich" could thus masquerade as a free federation, though it was really governed by the Prussian state. Prussia now dominated the Continent, and all Europe was henceforward to be different.

For the moment this meant to England the disappearance of what had long been her chief rival. The political decline of France was not only external but internal. A Parliamentary republic was founded which went rapidly from bad to worse, incapable of retrieving the lost position and increasingly mistrusted by its own citizens. The French were torn by internal dissensions, largely religious, living not only under the shadow and memory, but the effects, of their defeat, effects which they seemed incapable of repairing.

Just before the Franco-Prussian War French engineers, protected by the French Government after negotiations with the Egyptian ruler, had built the Suez Canal. Had the French not been defeated by the Prussian power and thus rendered helpless a grave problem would have arisen for England. Here was a new road to India. Its effect must necessarily be to supersede the old one round the Cape. The canal had been made by France, and Egypt was morally overshadowed by French power. But now that France was crushed England had nothing to fear. Five years after the Franco-Prussian War the English Government bought from the Khedive of Egypt nearly half the Suez

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Canal shares, and no effective protest came from France—on the contrary, there was a certain amount of support in the cosmopolitan financial world which was now becoming so important in Paris.

Five years later, the Egyptian debt, to the enormous amount of seventy-five millions, having given a pretext for European intervention in that country, England with the support of Bismarck intervened—and the French did not. Bismarck had already indirectly supported England in her interference between Russia and Turkey, when the former Power was on the point of occupying Constantinople after a successful war in 1877-78. The genius of Bismarck was never better seen than when, in the settlement of that affair, he managed to remain firm friends with the Russians (Russia and Prussia were bound together by their common interest in the destruction of Poland) and yet helped England to maintain the Turkish Empire and to prevent the Russian appearing at the all-important point of Constantinople. Bismarck further saw that by supporting English interference in Egypt he could long prevent any arrangements between England and France to the detriment of the new Prussian-German Empire. He also saw that so long as he did not build a fleet England would be content to have Prussia supreme upon the continent of Europe.

In foreign affairs, then, at the end of the fifteen years 1870-1885 England held Egypt and therefore the Suez Canal, which was the new and quick route to India. Having acquired Cyprus during the negotiations between Russia and Turkey, already possessing Malta and Gibraltar, England had mastered the gates of the Mediterranean Sea. By a chain of posts, supported by the invincible English Navy from its home waters in the far north-west of Europe, England held all the roads to Asia—and there she had as yet no rival at all. On only one point was England faced with a vulnerable land frontier which her invincible Navy could not defend; but this was the wide, tangled mass of mountains to the north-west of India which it would be a long and difficult task for an invader to cross.

**The New World.** During the previous period the English colonies had grown from insignificance to something approaching nationhood; they were still colonies and treated as such, their affairs mainly determined by the Mother Country, but they were increasing very rapidly. In the fifteen years Australia nearly

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doubled; Canada added a third to its numbers, as did the white population of South Africa, and the same progress was visible in commerce. That of Australia had leaped after the discovery of the goldfields from six millions to nearly sixty; Canada, under no such impulse, had much more than doubled its export and import; South Africa nearly doubled hers also.

This colonial world which was beginning to be called an empire, although the word was not yet popular and the idea less popular still, was something new in the experience of England. There were many of the more conservative kind in England who dreaded the future of that influence. They saw that the populations were mixed and would grow more mixed, that each colony would have its own problems which England would neither understand nor could directly deal with; they further saw that the whole type of civilization in the New World would become more and more different from that of a European country. In so far as they were English-speaking they would come more and more to resemble the United States, even in speech and intonation. Already in South Africa there had arisen long before a disturbing factor, a great emigration northward of the Dutch population and the founding by them of two independent republics, the creation of another 'frontier,' anomalous and a weakness to English sea-power. This country had tried to prevent the establishment of such a republic, but the Dutch (Boers, as they were called) in arms maintained their independence, leaving a problem for the future which was pregnant with mischief. But in the various problems which the new quarrel was beginning to raise for England obviously the most important was the relation between England and America.

It has already been pointed out that after the victory of the North and the consolidation of the United States, a country with a population already superior to that of Great Britain, a policy had been adopted of yielding on all occasions to America, with the double object of receiving American support if possible in European complications, and of giving Europe the illusion that the English-speaking world held together as one whole. The first-fruits of this new policy were felt in England in the matter of the claims put forward by the United States for compensation in what is known by the covering term of the *Alabama Case*. America claimed damage from England because the privateers of the Southern States, including the *Alabama*, had been equipped

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in English harbours and sailed from them. In the year 1870 the Foreign Enlistment Act was passed, which gratified the United States by saying that in future it was to be an offence to build ships under these circumstances. In May 1871 the Treaty of Washington was signed, including an apology for the action of the privateers and admitting arbitration. Counsel were to be heard in this arbitration (at Geneva) two years later, and three and a quarter million pounds damages were paid. Since then many cases of conflict have arisen, the wording of Notes has often been, especially from the American side, emphatic—but the conclusion has always been the same. Indeed, one of the principal changes in the history of England since the year 1870 has been this continuous acceptance of a unilateral agreement whereby, at no matter what an expense, friendship with the United States should be preserved. It has been so preserved, but at a cost of the complete reversal of the old attitude that England stood independent of every other Great Power, and ready to throw her weight into this scale or that to her own advantage.

**The Breakdown of Agriculture.** In the first years of this phase—that is, after 1870—general prices rose and agricultural prices with them. Wheat had remained close on 50s. a quarter; it rose by 1873 to 53s., higher than it had been since the Crimean War. It still remained in the neighbourhood of those prices till the late seventies and early eighties, when it began to fall very rapidly. By 1882 it was down 25 per cent., and by the end of the fifteen years 1870–85 it was selling for little more than half the price it had fetched in the earlier part of the period.

Thus began a breakdown of the agricultural system in these islands through the fall in agricultural prices, particularly the price of wheat, upon which crop all mixed or general farming depends. It became impossible to pay rents on the old scale, and the farmers' profits began to disappear, and England, which had already become a country needing great imports of grain, became henceforward largely dependent upon foreign supplies. So far as Great Britain was concerned, this change effected a readjustment in the structure of society. It lowered the position of the country gentleman, who had depended upon his rents rather than upon other forms of wealth; it took the heart out of the English farmer; it completed and emphasized the already

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pronounced tendency towards urbanization of the English people, caused a decline in the agricultural population and, what was worse, a tendency for only the weakest to remain on the land; moreover, it put a great deal of good land out of cultivation. Between 1850 and 1887 the number of bushels of grain grown to each inhabitant of Great Britain fell in the proportion of fifteen to eight.

**Moral Factors.** To the new and disturbing factors in the position of England after 1870—those to her advantage, such as the diminution of France, the increase in numbers and commerce and wealth, the occupation of Egypt and the Suez Canal, etc.; those to her disadvantage, such as the new colonial complications, the necessity of accepting a rising and now united America, and that worst trouble of all, to which we shall soon proceed, Ireland—we must add certain moral factors, upon the whole disadvantageous.

The weakening of the religious tone of England, though it had begun, is better dealt with in the next section, for it was not felt in bulk till towards the end of the century. But the effect upon institutions of the extension of the suffrage, the Ballot Act, the breakdown of agriculture, and compulsory schooling was very great.

The Ballot Act and universal compulsory education come at the beginning. Compulsory education began in this country in the year 1870. There then existed for the mass of English families—that is, for the poor—schools, mainly controlled by the Church of England, to which fees were paid by parents, and which received grants from the Government, which were therefore subject to some inspection from governmental officers, and accounted for roughly thirteen children out of every forty-three. Another ten out of every forty-three attended other schools, to which there was no governmental grant and of which there was no inspection, but always voluntarily. In February 1870 the Quaker politician Forster, whose later work in Ireland we have seen, produced a plan which seems to have been in great part his own for setting up school boards, and there was introduced the mention, though not at first the full application, of compulsory attendance. It was still to be left to the discretion of the parents to exercise compulsion or no; and from that moment onwards the system has grown into being one of complete and compulsory regimentation of all the nation for this purpose, below a small

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class which is wealthy enough to enjoy the privilege of choosing what education its children shall enjoy or suffer.

It is an error to suppose that compulsory education greatly changed the habits of the people. The enormous increase in the reading of popular newspapers and books came long after the date when compulsory schooling should have had its first effect. The new compulsion somewhat increased the number of literates—that is, of people who could read and, if they were pressed to do so, could write a few words. How much this increase was at first it is impossible to say, because there are no direct statistics of the previous state of affairs; long before board schools a large proportion of children were taught to read, and even to write a little, apart from the Church schools—and, indeed, apart from any school at all. The increase may have been as much as 50 or even over 50 per cent. beyond the natural increase of the population, but what did begin to change with increasing rapidity through the new system were three things: first, the sense of responsibility for the child in the family; secondly, the uniformity of instruction and the application of an official standard; thirdly, the power of the state in this most important of all its functions. But that this power to mould the minds of the children was not exaggerated out of all bounds as it has been elsewhere we owe to the fact that in England the new system was affected by a certain side-issue—quarrels between the Church of England and the Nonconformists. The Church of England, representing the governing class, was determined to maintain its schools; the small Catholic minority took advantage of the quarrel to establish their own right to the teaching of their religion in the schools frequented by their children. Through these divisions complete uniformity was avoided and the state was long delayed, and is still delayed, in its power to mould the whole nation to its views in the most critical years of life, though in some things that power is already apparent. But the effect of the change on the character of the English people was profound; it did not appear, of course, until the new system was fully established (and that took some years), and until the teachers had come to form a separate profession (a matter of some years more), until the state machinery had grown fixed and powerful (some years more again), nor until the children so influenced had come to maturity. One cannot say, therefore, that the revolution in English education which began in 1870

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bore its fruits during the fifteen years we are now following; the real effect came much later, and belongs to quite the end of the century. But the beginnings fall into this period.

The extension of the suffrage, which had already brought in a million new voters and had included the artisans of the towns in the Reform Bill of 1867, proceeded at the end of this fifteen years to another step, nearly doubling the total voting power of 1867 and multiplying by four that of 1832. As in the case of every other extension of the suffrage in England since 1832, the thing was not due to any popular demand; it came mainly because it was thought to be 'in the spirit of the times,' and somewhat because it worked in with the game of party politics at the moment. Yet it was to be not without effect in the somewhat distant future even in England, and in Ireland it had a great effect indeed. For there the vote could be used under the only two conditions which gives voting any value: namely, on a simple issue (1) which all men understood, and (2) in which all men were directly interested.

The institution of the ballot was, partly through the action of Ireland, of more effect. It came just at the beginning of this period, in 1872, and secured the secrecy of the vote. Traditional feeling naturally opposed it, and it was in England of no great effect for a long time to come because, since the end of Chartism, there had been no violent popular demand of a sort which would be intimidated by the employer or the landlord, and which therefore might be best expressed through secret voting. But in Ireland the effect was considerable, as will immediately be seen. It is worth remarking that at the same time, parallel to the other restrictive and regulating origins which were to make for general state control against individual freedom, came the first law shutting up the taverns by force at a fixed hour. Here again it was the principle rather than the fact that mattered—for the closing time was fixed for midnight in London and eleven o'clock in the country, hours at which you would have found most places shut anyhow. But yet a new coercion of the individual had appeared, a new chance for interference by the police, and a foundation for further action on the same model.

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### THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS: UP TO THE DEATH OF QUEEN VICTORIA (1885-1901)

**Nature of the Period.** With the last fifteen years before the death of Queen Victoria we enter the contemporary period—that is, we are dealing with events which many living men can remember, and, before the close of the reign, with events which are familiar to everybody over forty.

The nearer an historical matter comes to our own time, the more difficult it is to put it in its right perspective; and since it is the business of the historian to judge cause and effect, the less can true history be written and the more does that necessity for suspending judgment make the relation of past things more and more of a mere chronicle. As we approach the end of these fifteen years this character naturally increases; the succeeding period between the death of Queen Victoria and our own time can be no more than a brief succession of leading events with their dates. We cannot even tell, with regard to things so near to us, which will ultimately prove most important. Thus, the men of the day did not at all appreciate the vast importance to England and the world of the Irish Famine; thirty years later some few men had begun to appreciate it; its full magnitude is hardly appreciated even now. And so it is and will be with the events of our own time.

However, certain main lines are apparent. The colonies, later to be called Dominions, not only increased in weight, but came to be more regarded (rightly or wrongly) as part of the same Commonwealth with England. The term 'Imperial' comes more and more into use, and by the end of the period, just before the death of Queen Victoria, the use of that word 'Imperial' is not only universal, but, with an increasing number of people, is taking the place of the word 'English': and the term 'Empire' is made to do service for two very different things, the self-governing, scattered, but large communities of white men of mixed race—Australasia, the Cape, Canada—and also for the English rule over India, upon which in reality the whole strength of the system depends.

A second marked feature of this period is that in it there was a great change in the religious attitude of the English people, and added to this change (a third mark of the time) came the gradual

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extinction of any feeling against the monarchy, coupled with the further loss of such slight remnants of power as the sovereign still possessed, yet before the end of the fifteen years not only was the monarch (in the person of the Queen) idolized; it was later to be apparent, upon the death of her son King Edward, that the monarch had now become an object of political worship. All supported him, for all regarded him as the very symbol of the nation.

A fourth mark of the period was a certain change already apparent in the aristocratic quality of the English social structure. It had not gone far by the end of the reign, but it was already apparent, though no one could then guess the advances this change would make in the succeeding century.

In the capital matter of Ireland the curve which had been followed so rapidly since the reappearance of Ireland in English affairs in the early seventies was abruptly deflected by the fall of Parnell early in these last fifteen years of the reign. After that check the Home Rule Movement came to a standstill. The recovery of the land by the Irish people and the recovery of their powers of local administration, to the disadvantage of the old landlord class, proceeded rapidly; but there was no advance towards autonomy, no advance towards the government of an Irish state by the Irish people.

As for the general features which have marked Victorian England throughout, these continued to the end. An increase of population in Great Britain, a decrease in the population of Ireland, an increase in British international trade, the continued urbanization of the British people (especially the prodigious growth of London), the extension of monopoly under the control of a few centres and of industrial capitalism generally, and side by side with it the organization of the wage-earners over against those who controlled the industrial capitalist system and therefore the lives of the proletariat.

**Imperialism.** The movement towards Imperialism—that is, the substitution of the idea of Empire for the idea of England—arose from a number of causes, the chief of which perhaps was the new wealth acquired by a few of the adventurers in South Africa, where gold had been discovered. One of these, Cecil Rhodes, saw public affairs in this light, and was sincerely convinced that England as an empire rather than as a nation was the ideal which his fellow-citizens should follow. A forcible

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journalist, Mr William Stead, supported the movement, but there were a number of converging forces producing it, until it reached its height in the last years before the death of Queen Victoria. The fact that Egypt had been virtually annexed, though still in theory a foreign country, in which England only had a resident (but maintained a garrison), the possession of the Suez Canal, the development of rapid and continuous communication with the East and of more and more rapid communication in all transoceanic travel and commerce, the vast new investment conducted under the growing power of the banks, whereby English money developed the English-speaking world and the Argentine—all these things made for the new movement, as did also the changes in the structure of English society, particularly the greater effect of the urban Press and the weakening of local associations. The movement received great impetus towards the end of the period by the conquest of the Sudan, the subsequent humiliation of the French at Fashoda, and the challenge thrown down to Imperialism in South Africa.

In the Sudan General Gordon had been sent to the Upper Nile in the mid-eighties; he was confronted with a Mohammedan rising in which he lost his life, and the Sudan itself was lost to Egypt, an effort to rescue him having failed. All this was in 1884 and 1885, but before the end of the century an expedition was organized to recover the lost territory. The decision to do this was taken in 1896, eleven years after the first victory of the Mohammedans under their leader (or Mahdi) and the death of Gordon. On September 2, 1898, the Mahdi's army was annihilated by Sir Herbert Kitchener at the battle of Omdurman, and Khartoum, from which Gordon had ruled when he was besieged and killed, was reoccupied.

Meanwhile the French had been sending an expedition across Africa towards the Upper Nile, and they had raised their flag at Fashoda some weeks before the battle of Omdurman had been fought. The danger of war between the two nations was avoided by the French giving way, and in the spring of the next year, 1899, they surrendered all claim to Sudanese territory. It was in one aspect another step in the decline of French power in Europe, which had begun with the war of 1870; but those who have lived to a later day will look at it in another aspect as well. The French at Fashoda, as later also during the Boer

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War and even after that, had to decide between an understanding with Germany against England and an ultimate hope of an English alliance against Germany. At every step in the development they preferred to envisage the latter, though it is possible that if the German Government, at the head of which was now the energetic but fantastic Emperor William II, had seriously considered the neutralization of Alsace things might have gone otherwise. ✓

Imperialist feeling was further emphasized by the challenge thrown down to it in South Africa. The international capitalists, largely Jewish, who were interested in the new goldfields of the Transvaal, worked for the incorporation of that Dutch state with the British dominions to the south, and they worked in particular for the granting of full political rights to those who were called the Outlanders—that is, those who had emigrated into the Transvaal for the purpose of gold-mining. The most prominent figure in this agitation was Cecil Rhodes, and Sir Alfred Milner strongly supported it. In May 1899 he telegraphed to Mr Chamberlain, the Colonial Minister, demanding a firm stand by the British Government in favour of the Outlanders. Sir Alfred Milner negotiated in vain with Mr Kruger, the President of the Transvaal Republic, and by July military preparations were made, and a novel claim to British suzerainty over the Transvaal was put forward.

The other independent state in South Africa, the Orange Free State, threw in its lot with the Transvaal, and on October 9, 1899, the Boer Government asked for a reply within forty-eight hours to its demand that the troops massing on its borders should be withdrawn. On the 11th of the month hostilities began. They were to last for two and a half years and to cost £150,000,000, to end with the annexation of the Transvaal (after Queen Victoria's death), but also with the setting up of the whole South African Dominion into a state as independent as the other Dominions of the Crown.

Shortly before the outbreak of war in South Africa two points must be noted.

The first is the beginning, with Mr Harmsworth's *Daily Mail*, of a popular Press upon the American model which becomes of increasing importance, and produces henceforward a special effect on England unknown in the rest of Western European civilization, where a political factor of this particular sort has

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never appealed to the public and where no common language has fostered an imitation of American methods.

The second is the Dreyfus Case. A Jewish officer in the French Army having been condemned to transportation for treason, an insistent demand for a new trial to establish his innocence was raised at this time. The case aroused in France a religious quarrel which all but led to civil war, and was eagerly followed in this country where the innocence of Dreyfus was universally accepted. The thing, however, only much later concerned England directly when, as we shall see, it led, through the destruction of the French Military Intelligence Department, to the Great War of 1914-18.

**Religion.** A subtle but profound change in the religious thought of England was proceeding during these last years of Queen Victoria's reign. This bore at first no external fruit; the great spiritual change involved was to come only in our own time.

In the height of the Victorian period and spirit, in 1859, Charles Darwin published a book, *The Origin of Species*, the thesis of which was that the difference between living organisms is due not to any end or purpose in creation, but to the blind action of what he called "Natural Selection." Those animals that were better fitted to survive under changing conditions would survive, those less fitted to survive would die; and by this mechanism all the differences between living beings, from the simplest to the most complicated, could be accounted for.

The idea that living beings gradually grew into different structures, and might well have proceeded from one parent stem, was, of course, as old as human thought; a lifetime before Darwin's book appeared Buffon and Lamarck on the Continent had agreed with Aristotle in ascribing the changes which produced various species to something within the animal itself: some force or desire or natural tendency. They thus presupposed will and purpose behind the universe. But Darwin's theory made the process mechanical; those who accepted it did not deny the existence of a creative mind and purpose ordering the world—in other words, they did not deny God in so far as a Divine purpose appears to be manifested in living creatures; but they left to the working of blind chance that diversity of living organisms which religious traditions in this country had hitherto ascribed to the direct action of a Divine Creator.

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This idea of Natural Selection was the only novelty in Darwin's book, though he was also industrious in accumulating a vast amount of evidence in favour of the idea of gradual growth from original simple forms to later more complicated forms. To this idea was given the name 'Evolution,' a word longer than the word 'growth' but in its general use meaning exactly the same thing, though here specially used to connote the particular growth of species according to Darwin's doctrine. This denial or escape from creative purpose in the universe suited the anti-Christian side of thought in Europe, which had hitherto had little effect upon the English mind, though in France and the Catholic culture generally it had profoundly affected the more highly educated classes, and through them a great proportion of the people. Darwin's theory was at once simple and mechanical, and therefore appealed to the many who were now interested in popular science.

In the nations of Catholic culture the new philosophy had comparatively little social effect, because the decision had there long been taken between the Christian and anti-Christian position; as early as Napoleon's day it had been the judgment of the Emperor that France was almost equally divided in numbers between the two attitudes. But in England, where there was no such cleavage, and where the nation was, one may say; homogeneously attached to the main Christian doctrines of a personal God, the Incarnation, the Immortality of the Soul, and all that follows therefrom, reposing its attitude upon the English translation of the Scriptures—the English Bible—the shock, though at first affecting but a small section of the most highly educated, spread throughout the community.

In this general form it might, however, have had less effect had not the same author, Charles Darwin, published in 1871 his second book, based upon the first and called *The Descent of Man*. Therein he traced with immense erudition and innumerable detailed examples the presumed growth of human beings from animal origins. This second book clinched the affair; the account of man's origin in Genesis, the conception of man as a special creation in the image of God wholly distinct from the brute creation, was shaken; and with it, to those whose religion reposed, however vaguely, upon a literal and purely Biblical basis, all religion was shaken as well. The effects spread slowly but continuously, and towards the end of the nineteenth

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century one may say that it had become *in England* universal.

There entered into the popularity of these new conceptions in England a large element of patriotism. Two Englishmen, Darwin and his interpreter of genius, Huxley, had founded the new creed, and it is remarkable that when, in the twentieth century, the doctrine of Natural Selection fell more and more into disfavour with the scientific thought of Europe, England remained the one society where it was still most vigorously maintained. To this day numbers of even highly educated Englishmen are astonished when they hear that the doctrine of Natural Selection is moribund abroad.

The general effect of the whole movement was to dissolve the old English Biblical Protestantism, which had been the spiritual strength of the country throughout the nineteenth century, and the effects of that great spiritual revolution are still proceeding.

**The Social Structure and the Monarchy.** During these same last fifteen years of Queen Victoria's reign the social structure, and with it the political position of the monarchy, were also in process of transformation. The aristocratic spirit, side by side with the national attitude towards religion, had during the Queen's reign stood firm—it was inherited from the seventeenth century, when the landed aristocracy had taken over government from the King, and the new commercial fortunes founded on the Industrial Revolution were easily merged in the governing class; the public schools in their great nineteenth-century extension were the seminaries of that class, training it and giving it its character. Its rule remained unquestioned. Up to the end of Queen Victoria's reign the change in this spirit, though profound, had shown little external expression, but what was already beginning and was to become apparent in the next century was a weakening in the isolation and security of the gentry. New fortunes, not acquired slowly in commerce but rapidly by speculation, had their effect, and so had the corresponding sudden losses of fortune which accompanied the speculative spirit. Meanwhile the immense growth of the great towns, in which the people were quite cut off from the influence of the gentry, did its work, and the decline of agricultural England, which was the stronghold of the aristocratic spirit, pushed the change yet farther.

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At the same time there took place a much more apparent change in the attitude towards the monarchy. The old organized upper class had always looked with a jealous eye on any increase of the very slight political power still remaining to the Crown; it had helped to render the Crown unpopular—though that task needed little aid—until nearly the middle of the century. But the presence of a Queen upon the throne, the lack of overt interference by her in public affairs, had changed this sentiment; gradually as the nineteenth century proceeded the Throne became more and more of a symbol, gathering towards itself the passionate patriotism of the people, their sense of unity, and their pride in dominion. The Imperialist movement naturally added to this; the first Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887 was a public demonstration of feeling on the widest scale, the second in 1897 was an apotheosis; and the national feeling for the Queen in all ranks and throughout all those in the colonial Empire who were of English or Scottish descent had become an intense and permanent enthusiasm. The spirit continued unchanged throughout the thirty years following the Queen's death, and during the succeeding reigns of her son and grandson.

**Ireland.** The Irish matter now as ever—or rather more than ever—was the principal affair, and it seemed to be moving rapidly towards a climax: and this it was, but not in the fashion that either England or Ireland herself anticipated.

When Lord Salisbury took office at the head of a Conservative Government in 1886 he had had a majority of 118 over the Gladstonian Liberals and the Irish Nationalists combined in the House of Commons. The use of force in Ireland was emphasized; Mr Arthur Balfour, the nephew of Lord Salisbury, took over the government of that country, and the resistance to the payment of rents and arrears became stronger than ever. Side by side with it went the increasingly intensive use of obstruction in the House of Commons, and for dealing with the national movement in Ireland a new Crimes Bill was introduced and made permanent. Politics, as Lord Salisbury himself said, had now come to mean "Ireland and nothing else." The resistance to paying rent took the form of a movement called the "Plan of Campaign"; efforts had been made upon the English side to get the Pope to intervene; he had sent Monsignor Persico to judge the situation, and on receiving his report had issued

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a declaration in April 1888 denouncing the Plan of Campaign, and, in particular, boycott. It was of no effect, the complaint being advanced that the element of provocation had not been understood. Within a year the official organ of the Catholic Church in England had announced that the Pope's object had not been to weaken the Irish cause, but to maintain its moral reputation. The weight of the Irish attack had been further increased by the error of the chief official English newspaper, the *Times*, in publishing a series of articles called "Parnellism and Crime." A certain letter appeared purporting to be written by Parnell, and supposedly bearing Parnell's signature, in which letter the writer was made to approve of murder.

The letter had been sent to the *Times* by a certain Pigott. An action was brought, Pigott broke down in cross-examination, confessed his forgery, retracted his confession, fled to Madrid, and shot himself. The report of the judges forming the Commission which tried the case was issued in February 1890. Many charges brought against Parnell in the *Times* were approved, but the charge of conspiracy with murder was denounced as a forgery. The *Times* paid Parnell £5000, and had also to pay costs amounting to £25,000. Meanwhile the obstruction offered by the Nationalists to debate in Parliament had succeeded. It had been necessary to change the rules so that free debate, which was the essence of the vitality of the House of Commons and of its having any political meaning, came to an end. The Government by the use of its majority could close the debate at will, and from that day onward the prestige and even the significance of the House of Commons has declined. For it was not only the closure but the spirit working behind it in a hundred details through the rules of the place which made debate therein more and more unreal.

It seemed therefore in the year 1890 as though the battle which the Irish Party had engaged, and which the Irish peasantry had supported with so much energy and violence on Irish soil, was upon the point of success. Already the remaining powers of the landlord class had vanished with the new county councils, dual ownership had been firmly rooted, the power of eviction was passing, and the Land League quite as much as the Parnellite party seemed on the point of success: Even in England by-elections began to tell in favour of Home Rule: but just at that moment the political side of the movement

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received a check from which it did not recover. Parnell was named as co-respondent in an action for divorce.

Feeling upon divorce in those days was in England exceedingly strong. Any English Member of Parliament in such a position would have been compelled by the opinion of his colleagues to resign his seat. Parnell refused to do so. Gladstone, whether merely seizing the opportunity to wreck Home Rule and be rid of Irish pressure or actuated by sincere moral motives, refused to continue working with the Irish leader; there was a violent quarrel within the Nationalist Party, fanned by the secret resentment which many of its members felt for the aloofness of Parnell's character and the strict discipline he had imposed; the Irish clergy as a whole took sides against the former National leader, the party in Parliament was split into two sections who were at each other's throats; each loaded the other with abuse, and the mainspring of the movement was broken. This did not prevent the successive introduction and reintroduction of Home Rule Bills; one such was introduced within three years, but when it obtained a majority the House of Lords duly threw it out, and there was no real weight of English opinion behind it.

Parnell was dead (he died in 1891); Gladstone retired after his second and abortive Home Rule Bill (the more pronounced Nationalists in Parliament strongly denounced it as insufficient), the clauses of which had passed by small and dwindling majorities; and when the Lords threw it out they undoubtedly had the mass of politically minded England behind them. At the close of the nineteenth century a reasonable man would have judged that the chance of even partial independence for Ireland had been lost for ever.

On the other hand, the organization for the recovery of the land by the Irish peasantry from the landlords proceeded with success; and one main reason for this was the attitude of what had now become the chief power in English public life—the banking system. The banks, which had not yet acquired the supremacy they now hold but were already far advanced towards it, were deeply involved in the Irish land problem. They had directly and indirectly advanced large sums to the now impoverished landlords, on which the new dual ownership and reduction of rents made it more and more difficult to keep up the interest. It was to the advantage of the banks that the

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whole thing should be settled once and for all by yielding to the tenants' demands, imposing a fixed known sum upon them in payment for the land, and this policy matured within a few years. It was but two years after Queen Victoria's death, in 1903, that the Land Act bearing the name of Mr Wyndham, then Secretary of State for Ireland, made rent-purchase in that country possible. The banks were recouped at the expense of the English taxpayer; he was to advance £12,000,000 so that the Irishman might be tempted to buy back the land which had been taken by force from his ancestors at a price less than the market-price, while the landowner, the descendant or beneficiary of the original conquest completed by Oliver Cromwell, would (through the 12 per cent. bonus) obtain more than his rights were worth in the open market under the existing dual ownership system. The Irish people were to buy back what they still regarded as their own land in instalments spread over sixty-eight years, and would be in complete possession of it by 1972.

In this arrangement, of course, as in all modern long-term payments, the increment for usury was allowed for—in other words, the tenant was to pay double the real value of the land in the long run. But on the present value of the bonds the indebted landlord could satisfy the banks. With this Bill for the moment ended the struggle for the possession of the land of Ireland: as for the struggle for self-government by the Irish, it had fallen into repetitive habits. The settlement of the land was not altogether final, for the one party regarded it as compulsory repurchase of what was morally their own, the land having been robbed from their fathers, while the other regarded it as a payment morally due, like any other following upon an accepted contract. There was here a cause for conflict in the future, but the main point, the independence of the Irishman upon his own farm, had been reached at the end of a battle the most effective part of which extended over a quarter of a century.

**The Death of Queen Victoria.** The necessity of following to its conclusion the essential matter of Ireland has led us somewhat beyond the bounds of this period, which concludes with the death of Queen Victoria, and with that death the end of an epoch. Before the war in South Africa was as yet concluded the Queen, who had given her name to the greatest

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period in the annals of England, was dead. She had been persuaded to visit Ireland in April 1900, but her health was already failing. She died in her retreat of Osborne, a country house in the Isle of Wight, on January 22, 1901, being 81 years and 243 days of age, and having reigned 63 years and 216 days.

## XVI

### EPILOGUE

THE years following the death of Queen Victoria are too near to our own to admit of more than a catalogue of events. Queen Victoria's son, Edward, Prince of Wales, now fifty-nine years of age, acceded under the title of Edward VII. The state funeral of the late Queen took place on February 2. The crowning of the new King, however, was postponed on account of his health.

In June of the next year, 1902, the Boer War came to an end with the surrender of the enemy to the number of over 18,000. On August 9 King Edward was crowned. Before the end of the previous year, the first of his reign, the beginnings of a notable change in communications was apparent, a wireless message crossing the Atlantic for the first time. In 1903 began more or less openly what had been in preparation for some months, the consideration of a great diplomatic change on the part of Great Britain.

After the crushing defeat of France by Prussia in 1870 and the erection of a strong new German state under the King of Prussia as German Emperor, the genius of Bismarck had formed alliances all round, with the object of preventing a revival of French power. He had attached the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Italy to his system, and the British Government had consistently supported the new Germany, because the tradition of danger from France survived, because Bismarck had cleverly shepherded the French into making colonial experiments on a large scale, because France perpetually protested against the presence of England in Egypt, most of all because France was regarded as the only serious rival to England in sea-power. The submarine was already in existence, and it was from the French coast that the trade routes which converge upon England were menaced.

The change in all this was due to German proposals to build a considerable fleet. The new German Empire had rapidly

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increased in population and still more in wealth, and had the best equipped industry in the world. As a great naval Power it would be a formidable and perhaps mortal danger to Great Britain; there was therefore a tendency henceforward on the part of successive British Governments to reconsider their old support of Prussia.

After the German Emperor had got rid of Bismarck the German connection with Russia was broken, and the Russian Empire allied itself to the French Republic. England now began to consider the advisability of supporting France also, in order to bring pressure upon Germany not to build a fleet. There thus arose and continued for ten years a new grouping of the Great Powers. There was no formal alliance between England and France. Up to the last moment if the German Government had reduced its naval programme the English Government would have returned to its former attitude and would have abandoned the French connection. The German Emperor and his advisers determined, however, to continue their building of a great fleet. Among the results was a new understanding with France on colonial matters. The French abandoned their opposition to Britain in Egypt, and it was understood that should they desire further expansion in North Africa, especially in Morocco, England would support them. The Anglo-French Convention was signed on April 8, 1904.

Meanwhile, in the early part of the year, February 1904, war had broken out between Russia and Japan in the far east of Asia, Japan attacking Port Arthur, which the Russians had fortified, after demanding British ships stationed there to withdraw. Great Britain supported Japan in this struggle through the traditional policy of weakening Russia in Asia, because she was there regarded as a menace to India. In this war the Japanese were victorious, defeating the Russians by land in Manchuria, capturing Port Arthur on January 1, 1905, taking Mukden on March 10, and destroying in Japanese waters the Russian fleet sent out from Europe (May 27-28). The Japanese victory was confirmed by a peace signed on September 5, 1905.

One effect of this war was a vigorous revolutionary movement in Russia, which was for the moment suppressed, though not until there had been severe fighting and reprisals lasting into the year 1906.

In 1906 new and complete self-government was established

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in South Africa, including the former Boer states, which were now included in the Dominion. The full Constitution was not published till the end of the year. At the beginning of the same year, on January 12, 1906, there was held a general election in Great Britain, which had a double significance: first, the Liberal Party had such a large majority that it could afford still further to postpone the talk of self-government for Ireland. (There were 376 Liberals and 240 Irish and Conservatives combined, the Irish numbers being 83.) An attempt at a sort of Irish local council rather than a Parliament was refused in the next year by an Irish convention at Dublin. The second important feature in this Parliament was the presence of a third English party (the Labour Party) for the first time in appreciable numbers (29 members). Henceforward there arose something of a group system in modern English Parliamentary affairs.

An important departure belongs to the year 1907. A considerable reserve was created for the Army, formed out of the old yeomanry, militia, and Volunteer forces, and numbered no less than 300,000 men. This was all part of the new anxieties on Continental relations, especially with Germany. It passed the third reading in the House of Commons on June 19, 1907.

In 1908 two things of high importance appear.

(1) An Old Age Pensions Bill was passed in the July of that year, a further step in the reorganization of the Proletarian and Industrial Capitalist State. A proletarian who should have reached the age of seventy destitute and without means—that is, the vast majority of English men and women—should receive a small weekly allowance from the state, payments to begin on January 1 of the next year, 1909.

(2) Austria annexed a portion of the Balkans mainly inhabited by Slavs, thereby adding to the friction between the growing demand for Slav self-government and the Imperial power at Vienna.

In the next year, 1909, took place only one event of the first moment, but that one far surpassing in historical consequence to this country any other modern happening. On July 25 a French experimenter and constructor of flying machines, Henri Blériot, flew the Channel from Calais to Dover, and England ceased for the first time in history to be strategically an island. The very first of the new art of flying had been

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seen in 1890, when the first man rose from the ground in this fashion. It had improved until recently flight had extended from a few yards to eleven miles. But this crossing of the Channel marked a new epoch.

In 1910 the Union of South Africa was proclaimed, and the states composing that Union, including the former Boer republics, became an independent nation on the same footing as the other Dominions—that is, accepting the titular supremacy of the British Crown. On May 6 of the same year King Edward VII died at the age of 68 years and 179 days, having reigned 9 years and 104 days. His son succeeded under the title of King George V, being forty-five years of age.

In 1911 a further step towards the organization of the proletarian mass of the people under state control was proposed to become law. By this scheme the wages of a large proportion of the proletariat were taxed with the purpose of creating an insurance fund against sickness. The capitalist or employer was also taxed to contribute to this fund; the state made a further contribution at the expense of the general taxpayers of the country. The Bill became law at the end of the year, on December 16. The principle was later applied to insurance against unemployment.

In 1912 a war broke out in the Balkans between Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro on the one hand and Turkey on the other. This was the beginning of the conflicts which ended two years later in the Great European War. The first shot was fired by Montenegro, which had been the first state to declare war against Turkey, but already the German Empire under Prussia was taking measures in case of war between itself and its allies on the one hand and the Russian Empire on the other, to which measures the French replied by extending the term of their military service. The probability of conflict was increased by an acceptance in the spring of this year, 1912, of a French protectorate by the Sultan of Morocco. The Germans had previously entered a vigorous protest against this approaching arrangement which would debar them from yet another field of colonial expansion. The coast of Morocco opposite Gibraltar, including the town of Tangiers, was left under international control, and a broad belt of territory, made through English influence a Spanish protectorate, cut off French Morocco from the Mediterranean.

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The German protest against all this had previously resulted in the French yielding to the Germans a portion of their territory in Central Africa, and submitting to the humiliation of dismissing their Foreign Minister at the demand of the German Government. Official and public declarations had been made in England sympathetic with the French side in the quarrel and warning Germany indirectly of the disfavour with which this country regarded the continued increase in German naval power.

By the end of May 1913 hostilities in the Balkans were concluded by a peace in which Turkey admitted her defeat, surrendering much the greater part of her European territory to the Balkan States bordering upon it, but retaining possession of Constantinople.

This peace, however, did not check the rapid progress towards an outbreak of general European war. A second confused war in the Balkans followed, in which Russia appeared more and more as the antagonist of Austria, which Power had behind it the German Empire.

The critical point in this peril was the attitude of Great Britain. The Prussian General Staff, which was conducting the plans of Germany and her allies, calculated that the forces at their disposal could be certain of victory over the forces of the French and Russians combined. Italy was still Germany's ally, and Russia was not industrialized and therefore very weak in modern war material, which was wholly insufficient for the equipment of her huge forces; moreover, her mobilization was necessarily very slow from the condition and paucity of her railway facilities, and the vast spaces with which she had to deal. There was no formal alliance between France and England. The English Government had carefully emphasized its freedom from any tie requiring it to enter upon a war on the side of France. Further, the eternal Irish difficulty had taken on a most acute form. A Home Rule Bill was due to become law by the autumn of 1914, but the Orange Protestants of Ulster, in the north-east, had proclaimed their intention of rebellion if the law were passed. They were supported by a great weight of English opinion, and were permitted to import arms. Further, officers of the British forces in Ireland had resigned rather than carry out the coming law. It was not thought in Germany that in any circumstances Great Britain

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would enter a European war, but in her present embarrassments (summer of 1914) it was taken for granted she could not, even if she would. Meanwhile every effort was made up to the last moment by England to come to some agreement with Germany for the reduction of the German naval programme—efforts which were interpreted in Germany as signs of weakness.

On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austrian throne, while driving through the streets of Sarajevo, the capital of the Slav districts which Austria had recently annexed, was assassinated by a Slav, a Serbian subject. The Austrian Government sent the Serbian Government a note of violence unparalleled since the French Revolution and demanding the right to act in the punishment of this crime as though Serbia were a vassal state. Russia, the acknowledged protector of the Slavs of Greek religion and specially of Serbia, was thus directly challenged, and the Prussian General Staff accepted the opportunity for a general war. It issued a preliminary notice of mobilization. To this the Russian Government replied by ordering mobilization in its turn, whereupon immediately Prussia and Austria proceeded to the further step of full mobilization.

The German Government next addressed an ultimatum to France insisting on the declaration of French neutrality and demanding the handing over of French towns as a guarantee.

On the refusal of this demand the German Government declared war on France, as had the Austrian on Russia, and immediately Austria and Germany, the armed Central Powers of Europe, were at war with the Franco-Russian alliance. Italy, though the ally of the Central Powers, refused to move, nor did the English Government declare itself. The German forces crossed the frontier of Belgium, thereby violating neutral territory on the same day and at the same hour as they had crossed the French frontier in the war of 1870, August 4. Whereupon, after a long and doubtful Cabinet discussion, England entered the War.

The calculations of the Prussian General Staff were sound. The numerical strength of the Central Powers in fully equipped and fully trained men was superior to that which the French and Russians could put in the field. In power of munitionment, and especially of heavy artillery, the Central Powers were immensely superior to their opponents. Over and above this the

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French would enter the war blindfold. The Intelligence Department of their Army had been destroyed in the great religious quarrel between the Army and the politicians following on the Dreyfus business, and had been handed over to civilians. It was known that England could at first supply only a very small (though highly trained and professional) expeditionary force, about one-twentieth of the French forces in number.

The War began therefore with a German sweep through Belgium after the failure of a miscalculated French offensive in Lorraine, the German armies attempting the encirclement of the French. Meanwhile the Russians invaded Prussia upon the east. The Russian armies were checked in a crushing defeat (Tannenberg) early in the operations on the Eastern Front. The French army, extended on its left by the British contingent, was thrust back to the neighbourhood of Paris. The lines extended from this point on the west to the Vosges Mountains on the east. In the second week of September 1914 the great German encircling movement failed, being held and turned in flank (the battle of the Marne). The Prussian General Staff next attempted to turn the Allied flank by the north. They should have succeeded, for they had interior lines and considerable superiority of numbers, but the Allied line extended more rapidly than their own and reached the sea before them. From that moment (October 1914) the war in the west became a siege; but a siege under strange conditions, for superior forces with far greater weight in munitions were contained by an inferior one.

On the east the initial Russian reverse developed into a general retreat in the face of overwhelmingly superior artillery fire. Nor was the advance of the Central Powers halted until all Poland and Serbia had been overrun and the Russian line thrown back to the longitude of Brest-Litovsk. Meanwhile Turkey had entered the War on the side of the Central Powers, to which it was linked up by a similar action on the part of Bulgaria. It was thus impossible to munition Russia from the west through the Dardanelles. England thereupon undertook an expedition to force the Dardanelles, first by the use of the Navy alone, then by landing troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The effort failed, and was abandoned by the end of 1915. Italy had long joined the Western Allies and all the Great

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Powers of Europe were engaged in the prolonged struggle and deadlock of 1916.

At the end of that year the Central Powers, on the initiative of the German Government, made overtures for peace. England had accomplished an effort which had been thought impossible, and had created out of nothing, as it were, a full conscript force, at the same time developing to a prodigious extent her industrial power for the munitioning of the Western Allies. By the use of her credit she financed an increasing stream of munitionment from America. The German overtures were rejected, but England's naval power could not be used after the fashion that had been expected for two reasons: first, that the United States were ready to support in arms their claim to trade as a neutral, so that Great Britain would not risk a complete blockade, and material provisionment reached the enemy through neutral ports. Secondly, it was apparent that the submarine and the use of mines had crippled the old supremacy of sea-power. Intensive action by the German submarines for the purpose of reducing England by blockade, including the sinking of American ships, brought the United States into the War in the spring of 1917. But though this added to the force available for meeting the submarine menace and permitted the beginnings and growth of a true blockade, no appreciable American effort by land could mature for many months, and meanwhile the breakdown of Russia had changed the face of the War.

A socialist, which soon became a communist, revolution in that country relieved all pressure on the Central Powers on the east; they withdrew great numbers of men for special training in view of decisive effort, resting them behind the lines and preparing them intensively for that end against the exhausted Allies upon the Western Front. There had been bad mutinies in the French armies as the result of the strain in the summer of 1917. A last attempt to break the German lines on the west had failed when, in the autumn of the year, the refreshed and specially trained forces which the breakdown of Russia had released achieved their first great success, piercing the Italian lines at Caporetto and capturing prodigious amounts of men and material. The line there was at last stabilized, but with the spring of 1918 the same new instrument was launched against the English half of the Allied line in the west at Saint-Quentin.

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The point was well chosen, being the junction of the French and British lines on the Western Front, the driest point thereon, and so placed that if the enemy got through far enough he would cut the main line of railway running behind and supplying both armies from Paris to the Strait of Dover. The line there, commanded by General Gough, the same officer who had been concerned with the refusal to carry out the law in Ireland, broke, and the enemy advance was carried forward very rapidly for a week (Easter week 1918). General Gough retired by his right; a wide gap therefore opened between the French and the British forces, and it seemed for one moment as though the War were lost for the Allies. The gap was filled by a rapid French advance from the south, the enemy's effort was exhausted, and the line re-formed, but only just in time to save Amiens and the railway. As at Caporetto, a very large number of men and masses of material fell into the hands of the enemy.

This disaster, the worst of the War, had the good effect of convincing the Allies that a united command was necessary, and General Foch was given control of the whole of the Western Front.

The enemy attacked again farther south between Rheims and Soissons, choosing a point of mixed forces, where a British division had arrived in front of its guns. The line again broke, the French being thrust back with very heavy losses as far as Château-Thierry, on the way to Paris. It was again formed, and by this time the American contingents were beginning to tell, arriving in increasing numbers.

The last enemy attack of consequence was delivered on this same sector from Rheims on July 15, 1918. It failed. The French and Americans under Mangin counter-attacked on July 18 near Soissons, to the north, and made an advance of several miles, compelling the enemy to withdraw from all the territory he had gained at Château-Thierry.

From that moment the advance was continuous. The British gained another victory farther north again on the Amiens front in early August. After that each successive week the enemy line was pushed in at one point or another, and thrust back with increasing loss of men and material, until at the beginning of November it could no longer stand. In the Balkans the front had broken and the way lay open to Vienna. In Italy the whole Austrian Army had surrendered to the Italians. On the

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north the German Emperor had fled. On November 11 the Germans accepted an armistice.

The War as a whole had cost twelve million lives, with at least double that number of maimed or otherwise injured for life. It had left great areas of north-eastern France devastated, and taken also a very heavy toll of the world's shipping, principally British. Great Britain, Ireland, and the independent Dominions under the British Crown had lost over one million men, the Italians much the same, and the French, including their colonial troops, from a third to a half more; the Russians some unknown number, but over two million; Serbia half its adult male population; etc.

The various treaties of peace that followed, imposed by the victors, dismembered the Austrian Empire, erecting independent Slav nations outside the core of Germans and Magyars. Poland was recalled to life, and, what was of capital importance for the future, given her ancient sea province of the Pomorze, separating from the rest of Prussia the isolated Protestant and German province of East Prussia. Alsace-Lorraine returned to the French. The Italians, in spite of their sacrifices, obtained little more than the port of Trieste, which was Italian-speaking and, as a matter of course, the frontier of the Alps, which gave them all the Italian districts hitherto under Austrian domination and a small wedge of German-speaking population south of the Alpine passes. The great mass of the German colonies were taken over by Britain and the Dominions. These terms were largely influenced by the United States through their President, Woodrow Wilson, who also included in the main treaty the erection of a sort of Parliament of peoples, called the League of Nations, framed on lines laid down by the philosopher Kant, and having its seat in Calvin's city of Geneva. Great Britain took over, by what was called a mandate, Palestine, which was to be made a national home for the Jewish people, thus creating a new land frontier with the French in Syria to the north of it. She also indirectly controlled a new state set up in Mesopotamia containing a large supply of oil. But the effort to hold Constantinople failed, and the Turks wholly defeated the Greeks who had been sent forward to attack them in this connection. The Communist Government of Russia had attempted to overrun Poland in the previous year, 1921, but saw its armies totally defeated outside Warsaw.

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The remaining twelve years consist, as far as the history of this country is concerned, of two things: the financial chaos and a partial success of the Irish.

As to the first: The destruction of wealth through the War and the enormous indebtedness of the belligerent Governments to the United States led to a general breakdown of currency. The German currency sank to zero, wiping out all internal debts; that of the French to a fifth of its former value; that of the Italians to between a third and a quarter. The English and American stood firm. The defeated nations were condemned to pay reparations for the damage caused by their invasions, but in practice the demand fell almost entirely upon the Germans. They met it, not of their own resources, but by borrowing somewhat from England and largely from America, from the banks of which Powers they also obtained loans at very high interest to restart their industries. Much the most of the reparations thus paid was returned by the French and English to the United States in repayment of gigantic loans advanced during the War; but there came a moment when the demand for interest on loans made to Germany direct, especially by American banks but also by English, could not be met if reparations were to be paid as well. Reparations went to the wall and were cancelled in favour of interest to the bankers. The Germans then said they would not pay the interest on the loans either. The French said that, not receiving any reparations, they could hand on nothing to the Americans in payment of their debt, and the English, after a hard struggle to maintain the American payment according to their fixed tradition of doing everything possible to serve the United States, were compelled to suspend payments in their turn save for a token of 10 per cent. But this was not until English currency had broken down in the autumn of 1931 and fallen at last to about two-thirds of its old value.

As to Ireland: A rebellion broke out in 1916. It was repressed. At the conclusion of the War the Irish again rose in an effort which assumed formidable proportions. The repression proved increasingly difficult. In its last stages an irregular force popularly known as the Black-and-Tans was employed to act at large, but its recruitment was of such bad character, and its conduct so shocked opinion not only throughout the world but at home, that a last attempt was made to

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settle the affair by the use of the Regular Army. This also failed. In conclusion a treaty was drawn up whereby England admitted the right to self-government in Ireland, with the exception of six counties in the north-east. The frontier of these was so drawn that, for the moment at least, there should be a majority of Protestants within it, but that as large a number of Catholics as possible should be separated from the rest of Ireland. Of the six counties two, Fermanagh and Tyrone, had a Catholic and Nationalist majority. The frontier was left vaguely subject to a revision which has never taken place. After ten years the Irish Government refused to continue the payment of annuities for the repurchase of Irish land, until an independent arbitrator should have given the case against them, advancing the plea that the obligation should be regarded as part of the English National Debt which had been disassociated from Ireland by the treaty. The English Government retaliated by levying heavy duties on Irish trade. At the moment of writing (mid-1934) the quarrel is still proceeding.

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